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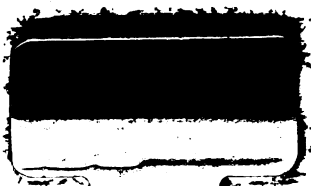
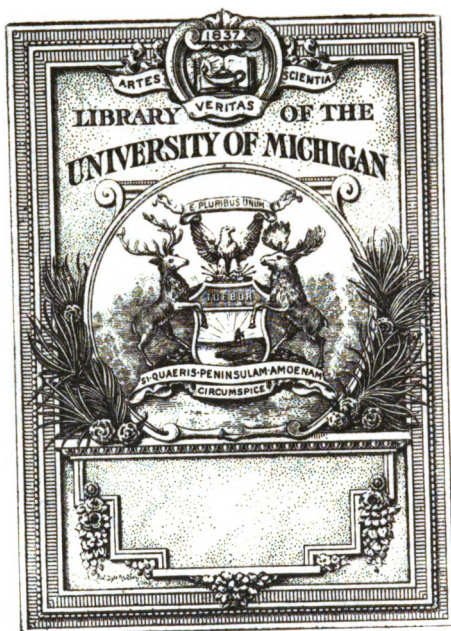
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SELECT NOTES.

A COMMENTARY

ON THE

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS

FOR

1895.

*Inductive, Suggestive, Explanatory, Illustrative,
Doctrinal, and Practical.*

ILLUSTRATED FROM DRAWINGS BY JOHN HUYBERS AND SEARS GALLAGHER,
COLORED MAPS, CHRONOLOGY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT,
CHRONOLOGY AND HARMONY OF THE LIFE OF
CHRIST, SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS,
LIBRARY REFERENCES.

BY

REV. F. N. PELOUBET, D. D.,
AND M. A. PELOUBET.

*Studies in The Life of Our Lord, and in Jewish History from
Exodus to 1 Samuel.*

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL VOLUME.

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OLD TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY.

EVENT.	DATE (B.C.).	PLACE.	SECULAR HISTORY.
Adam and Eve.....	4004	Eden.	
The flood	2348		
Birth of Abraham.....	1906	Ur of the Chaldees.	Founding of kingdom of Egypt.
Call of Abraham.....	1921	Ur to Canaan.	Founding of Chaldean Empire,
Birth of Jacob and Esau.....	1838	Beersheba.	2286.
Joseph made ruler over Egypt....	1716	Egypt, Heliopolis.	Cecrops founded Athens, 1556.
Birth of Moses.....	1571	Egypt, Zoan.	Rameses II. (Sesostris) King of
Call of Moses.....	1492	Southern Arabia, Sinai.	Egypt.
The exodus.....	1491, April	Egypt to Arabia.	Manephtah, King of Egypt.
<i>The Wilderness Life.</i>			
The Ten Commandments given..	1491, May	Sinai.	
The golden calf.....	1491, July	"	
The tabernacle set up.....	1490, March	"	
The ceremonial law given.....	1490, April, May	"	
Nadab and Abihu.....	"	"	
The wanderings in the wilderness	1491-1451	Des. of Paran.	
New start for Canaan.....	1452, April	Kadesh.	Troy founded, 1480.
Waters from the rock.....	1452, April	Meribah.	
Death of Aaron.....	1452, Summer	Mt. Hor.	
The fiery serpents.....	1452, September	The Arabah.	
Balaam's blessing.....	1452, Autumn	Moab.	
Death of Moses.....	1451, February	Mt. Nebo or Pisgah.	
<i>The Conquest.</i>			
Passing over Jordan.....	1451, April		
The fall of Jericho.....	1451	Near Jericho.	
Defeat at Ai.....	1451		
Reading of the Law at Ebal and	1451, Early Sum-		
Gerizim	mer	Shechem.	
The conquest of Canaan.....	1451-1443	Palestine.	
Joshua renewing the covenant....	1427		
The death of Joshua.....	1427	Timnath-serah.	
<i>The Period of the Judges.</i>			
First Judge, Othniel.....	1427-1387		
Deborah and Barak.....	1269	Plain of Esdraelon.	
Gideon (rest 40 years).....	1222-1182	Ophrah, near Shechem.	
Ruth and Naomi.....	1222-1182	Bethlehem.	Capture of Troy by the Greeks, [1184.
Birth of Samuel.....	1146		Æneas founds Lavinium in
Judgeship of Eli.....	1154-1114		Italy, 1182.
Jesse born.....	1135	Bethlehem.	Ascanius builds Alba Longa,
Samuel called of God.....	1134	Shiloh.	1132.
Samson judge.....	1116-1096	West Israel.	
Death of Eli.....	1114	Shiloh.	
Samuel judge.....	1114-1094 or	Ramah.	
	to 1075		
<i>The Kingdom of Saul.</i>			
Saul the first king.....	1095 or 1075	Gibeah of Saul.	
David born.....	1085	Bethlehem.	
Saul rejected.....	1079 or 1065		
David anointed.....	1065	Bethlehem.	
David and Goliath.....	1063, April or	Valley of Elah, in Ju-	
	May	dah.	
David's marriage to Michal.....	1062		
David and Jonathan.....	1062	The rock Ezel.	
David's flight from Saul.....	1062	Gibeah, Nob, Gath.	
David's exile.....	1062-1055		Tyre flourishes under Hiram.
David spares Saul.....	1060, April	Engedi.	Gad the prophet.
Death of Saul and Jonathan.....	1055	Mt. Gilboa.	
<i>The Kingdom of David.</i>			
David made king.....	1055	Hebron.	
David king over Judah.....	1055-1048	Capital at Hebron.	
David made king over all Israel..	1048	Capital at Jerusalem.	Nathan the prophet.
Absalom's rebellion.....	1023	Hebron, Jerusalem.	
Death of David.....	1015	Jerusalem.	

CHRONOLOGY AND HARMONY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

LES.	EVENTS.	PLACE.	DATE.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
1st Quar.	THIRD YEAR.		A.D. 29.	YE	AR OF AND W	TEACH ORKING.	ING.
	Second rejection at Nazareth....	Nazareth	Winter	13: 54-58	6: 1-6	.....	.....
	Third circuit of Galilee.....	Galilee	"	9: 35-38	6: 6	.....	.....
	The mission of the twelve.....	"	Winter and	10: 1-42	6: 7-13	9: 1-6	.....
I.	John the Baptist beheaded.....	Castle Macherus	Spring	14: 6-12	6: 21-29	.....	.....
II.	Feeding of the five thousand....	near Bethsaida	March	14: 13-21	6: 32-44	9: 10-17	6: 1-14
	Jesus walks on the sea.....	Sea of Galilee	April	14: 22-36	6: 45-56	.....	6: 15-21
III.	Discourses.....	Capernaum	"	15: 1-20	7: 1-23	.....	6: 22-71
	Journeys through Tyre, Sidon, and Decapolis.....	"	May and June	15: 21	7: 24, 31	.....	.....
	Daughter of Syrophenician woman healed.....	region of Tyre and Sidon	"	15: 21-28	7: 24-30	.....	.....
	Deaf and dumb man cured, and others.....	Decapolis	"	15: 29-38	7: 31-8: 9	.....	.....
	Blind man healed.....	Bethsaida	"	16: 13-28	8: 22-26	.....	.....
IV.	Jesus foretells his death.....	Cesarea Philippi	Summer	16: 13-28	8: 27-38	9: 18-27	.....
V.	The Transfiguration.....	Mt. Hermon	"	17: 1-13	9: 2-13	9: 28-36	.....
	Healing of lunatic child.....	Cesarea Philippi	"	17: 14-21	9: 14-29	9: 37-43	.....
VI.	Journey through Galilee.....	Galilee	Autumn	17: 22 10	9: 30-50	9: 43-50	.....
	Jesus and the children.....	"	"	18: 35	.....	.....	.....
	Christ at the Feast of Tabernacles	Jerusalem	October 11	.....	.....	.....	7: 1-53
VIII.	The true children of God.....	"	"	.....	.....	.....	8: 1-59
	Christ and the blind man.....	"	"	.....	.....	.....	9: 1-41
	Christ the Good Shepherd.....	"	"	.....	.....	.....	10: 1-21
	Final departure from Galilee.....	"	"	19: 1	10: 1	9: 51	.....
	Sending of the seventy.....	Perea	November	.....	.....	10: 1-24	.....
VII.	Parable of the Good Samaritan....	"	"	.....	.....	10: 25-37	.....
	Teaching the disciples to pray....	"	"	.....	.....	11: 1-13	.....
	Parable of the foolish rich man....	"	"	.....	.....	12: 13-21	.....
	Various discourses.....	Perea	Nov. & Dec.	.....	.....	11-13	.....
	Mary and Martha.....	Bethany	December	.....	.....	10: 38-42	.....
	Retires to place where he was baptized.....	Bethabara, beyond Jordan	Dec. & Jan.	.....	.....	.....	10: 39-42
	Discourses and parables, The Lost Sheep, The Prodigal Son.	Perea	December	.....	.....	14: 1 to 17: 10	.....
	CLOSING MINISTRY.		A.D. 30.	JAN.,	FEB.,	MARCH.	
IX.	Raising of Lazarus from the dead.	Bethany	Jan. & Feb.	.....	.....	.....	11: 7-46
	Jesus retires to Ephraim on account of the hostility of the Jews	Jerusalem and Ephraim	"	.....	.....	.....	11: 47-54
	The ten lepers.....	between Samaria and Galilee	March.	.....	.....	17: 12-19	.....
	The kingdom of God.....	"	"	.....	.....	17: 20-37	.....
	Parables on prayer.....	"	"	.....	.....	18: 1-14	.....
X.	Jesus and the children.....	Perea	"	19: 13-15	10: 13-16	18: 15-17	.....
	The rich young ruler.....	"	"	19: 16-30	10: 17-31	18: 18-30	.....
	Parable of laborers in the vineyard	"	"	20: 1-16	.....	.....	.....
	Bartimeus receives his sight.....	Jericho	"	20: 29-34	10: 46-54	18: 35-43	.....
XI.	Zaccheus the publican.....	"	"	.....	.....	19: 1-10	.....
	Parable of the pounds.....	"	"	.....	.....	19: 11-28	.....
2nd Quar.	THE LAST WEEK.			APRIL 1 TO	7.		
	Supper at Bethany.....	Bethany	Sat., Apr. 1	.....	.....	.....	12: 1-11
I.	Anointing of Jesus by Mary.....	"	"	.....	.....	.....	"
	The triumphal entry.....	Jerusalem	Sun., Apr. 2	21: 1-11	11: 1-11	19: 29-44	12: 12-19
	The second cleansing of the temple	"	Mon., Apr. 3	21: 12-17	11: 15-19	19: 45-48	.....
	The withered fig tree.....	Mt. of Olives	Tue., Apr. 4	21: 18-22	11: 20-26	.....	.....
II.	Parables of the two sons, the wicked husbandmen, and the wedding garment.....	In the temple at Jerusalem	"	21: 23 to 12: 12	11: 27 to 12: 12	20: 1-19	.....
	The Widow's mite.....	"	"	.....	12: 41-44	21: 1-4	.....
	Greek delegation to see Jesus....	"	"	.....	.....	.....	12: 20-50
III.	Prophecies of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the world.....	Mt. of Olives	"	24: 1-15	13: 1-37	21: 5-36	.....

CHRONOLOGY AND HARMONY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.—(Continued.)

LBS.	EVENTS.	PLACE.	DATE.	MATT.	MARK.	LUKE.	JOHN.
	Parables of ten virgins, talents, last judgment.....			25: 1-46			
	Preparing for the last Passover...	Jerusalem	Thu., Apr. 6	26: 17-19	14: 12-17	22: 7-14	....
IV.	Institution of the Lord's Supper.	"	Thurs. Eve. Apr. 6	26: 20-29	14: 22-25	22: 15-38	13: 1-38
	Jesus' last discourse.....	"	"				14: 1 to 16: 33
	Jesus' last prayer.....	"	"				17: 1-26
V.	The agony in Gethsemane.....	Mt. of Olives	April 7:— Fri. Morn., early between 1 & 2 o'clock	26: 37-46	14: 33-42	22: 41-46	.....
VI.	The betrayal of Jesus.....	"	"	26: 47-56	14: 43-52	22: 47-53	18: 1-12
	Trial of Jesus by the Jews.....	Jerusalem	2 to 6 "	26: 57-75	14: 53-72	22: 54-71	18: 13, 14
	Peter's denials and repentance...	"	" "	26: 69-75	14: 66-72	22: 56-62	18: 15-18
VII.	Jesus before Pilate.....	"	6 " 9 "	27: 2-26	15: 2-15	23: 2-25	18: 28-40
	Jesus mocked by the Roman soldiers.....	"	7 " 9 "	27: 27-30	15: 16-19	.....	19: 1-3
	Jesus delivered to be crucified...	"	8 " 9 "	27: 31-34	15: 20, 21	23: 26-32	19: 4-17
VIII.	THE CRUCIFIXION.....	Calvary	9 " 3 "	27: 35-56	15: 24-41	23: 33-49	19: 18-30
	The burial.....	Garden near Calvary	3 " 6 P. M.	27: 57-66	15: 42-47	23: 50-56	19: 31-42
IX.	THE RESURRECTION.....	"	Sun. Morn., Apr. 9	28: 1-4			
X.	Appearance to the women.....	Emmaus	"	28: 5-10	16: 1-11	24: 1-12	20: 1-18
	Walk to Emmaus.....	"	"		16: 12, 13	24: 13-35	
XI.	Other appearances.....	Jerusalem and Galilee	Sun. Aft'n April or May	28: 16-20	16: 15-18		20: 19 to 21: 22
XII.	THE ASCENSION.....	Olivet	May 18		16: 19, 20	24: 44-53	

OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

In order to gain the most good from our Study of the Life of Christ which we continue this year from the last it is necessary to keep constantly in mind the relation of each separate part to the whole, to study each part thoroughly, and to note at the same time how it helps make up the perfect man, Christ Jesus, and how it bears upon his great work of redemption. Therefore,—

1. Learn this brief outline by heart, the first part as a needed review.
2. Use it in connection with the maps and the fuller chronology.
3. Enlarge this outline for a chart to be used by the school as a whole.
4. Trace every journey on the map. (An outline map can be used with advantage.)

PRE-EXISTENCE.	The eternal Son of God.	<i>Fitness to reveal God and his truth, and message to man.</i>
BIRTH. last part of B. C. 5.	The incarnation.	<i>The wonderful method of coming to man.</i>
YOUTH. 30 years B. C. 4 to 26.	Home life training.	<i>The Saviour for the young. An example. "Like as we are, yet without sin."</i>
THE FORERUNNER.	Outward preparation for his work.	<i>The world prepared. The fitness of the time. Attracting attention.</i>
Baptism. The Holy Spirit. The temptation.	Personal preparation.	<i>Public profession. Induement with power. Tested and proved.</i>
FIRST YEAR OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY. A.D. 27.		
YEAR OF BEGINNINGS.	THE JUDEAN MINISTRY. Recorded chiefly by John.	YEAR OF TEACHING AND WORKING.
1. The first disciples.		Feeding the five thousand.
2. The first miracle.		The Transfiguration.
3. The first reform.		Final departure from Galilee.
4. The first discourse.		The Good Samaritan.
5. The first tour. Judea.		The Prodigal Son.
6. The first work in Samaria.		Districts around Galilee. May to September.
7. The first of the Galilean ministry.		Chiefly Jerusalem and Perea. October to December.
THREE MONTHS OF CLOSING MINISTRY. A.D. 30.		
SECOND YEAR. A.D. 28.	THE GREAT GALILEAN MINISTRY was A year and 4 months.	January to April.
YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT.		Raising of Lazarus.
1st Epoch. Apostles.		Triumphal entry.
2d " Principles.		Last teachings in the temple.
3d " Opposition.		The Lord's Supper.
4th " Parables.		The trial.
5th " Missions.		The Crucifixion.
6th " Miracles illustrating the Gospel.	Recorded chiefly by Matt., Mark., and Luke.	The Resurrection. The Ascension.
		Chiefly in Perea, and the vicinity of Jerusalem. More than one third of the Gospels belongs to this period. Last week in Jerusalem. The central events of Christ's life.

CLASS RECORD.

DIRECTIONS.—Put in a simple line | for absence, and a + for tardiness. If desired, the amount of contribution can be put in, which will of itself prove "presence."

Class.....of the.....Sunday School.

Teacher.....

NUMBER.	ADDRESS.	NAME.	JANUARY.				FEBRUARY.				MARCH.				APRIL.				MAY.				JUNE.			
			6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	7	14	21	28	5	12	19	26	2	9	16
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Average attendance for the quarter																										

CLASS RECORD.

NOTE.—Whatever it is desired to emphasize and impress, keep an account thereof. If you would have your scholars bring a contribution every Sabbath, then call their attention to it by marking their contributions. If you specially desire them to study their lessons at home, then mark that fact in their presence.

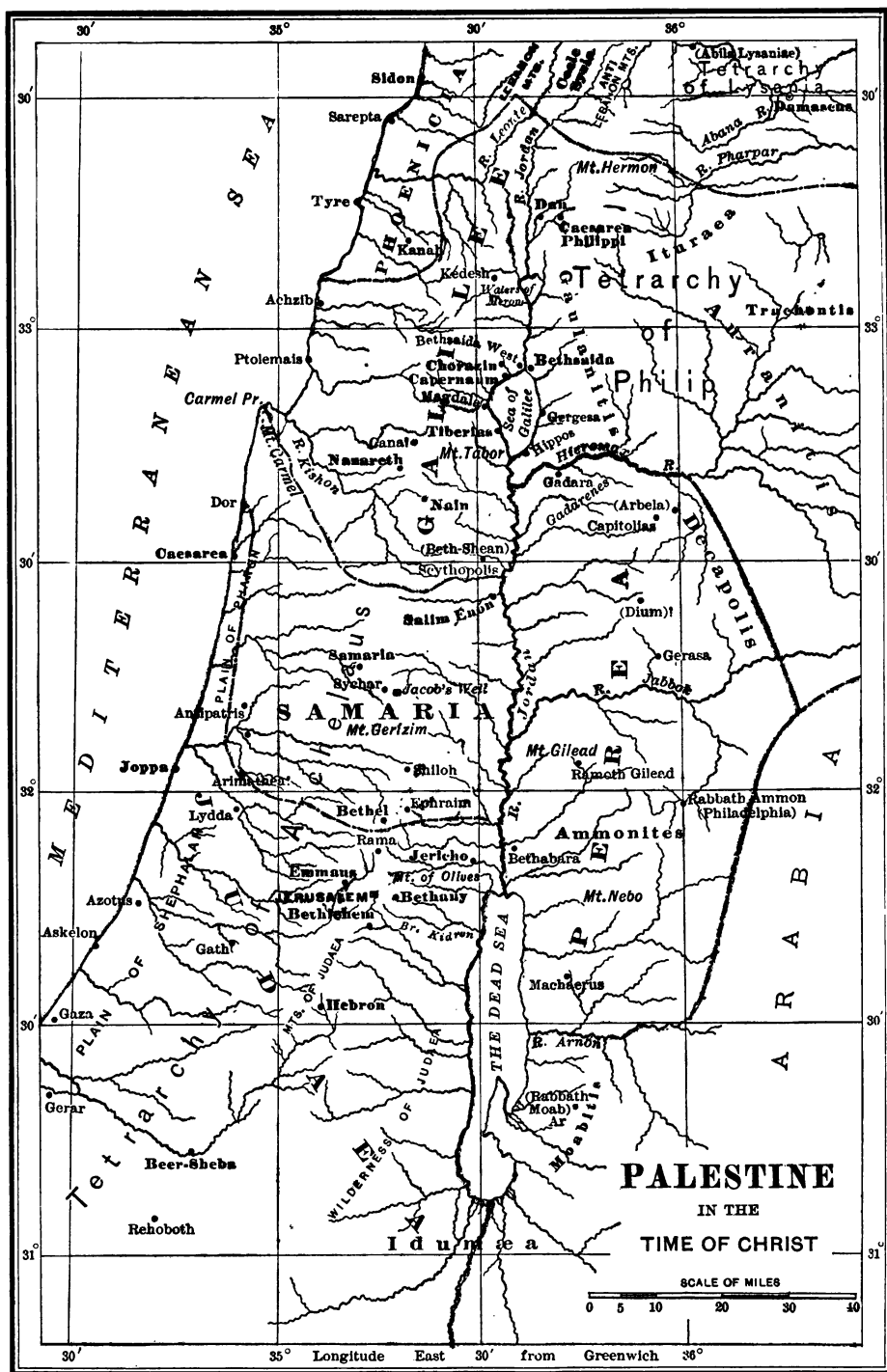
NUMBER.	ADDRESS.	NAME.	JULY.				AUGUST.				SEPTEMBER.				OCTOBER.				NOVEMBER.				DECEMBER.			
			7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25	1	8	15	22	29	6	13	20	27	3	10	17	24	1	8	15
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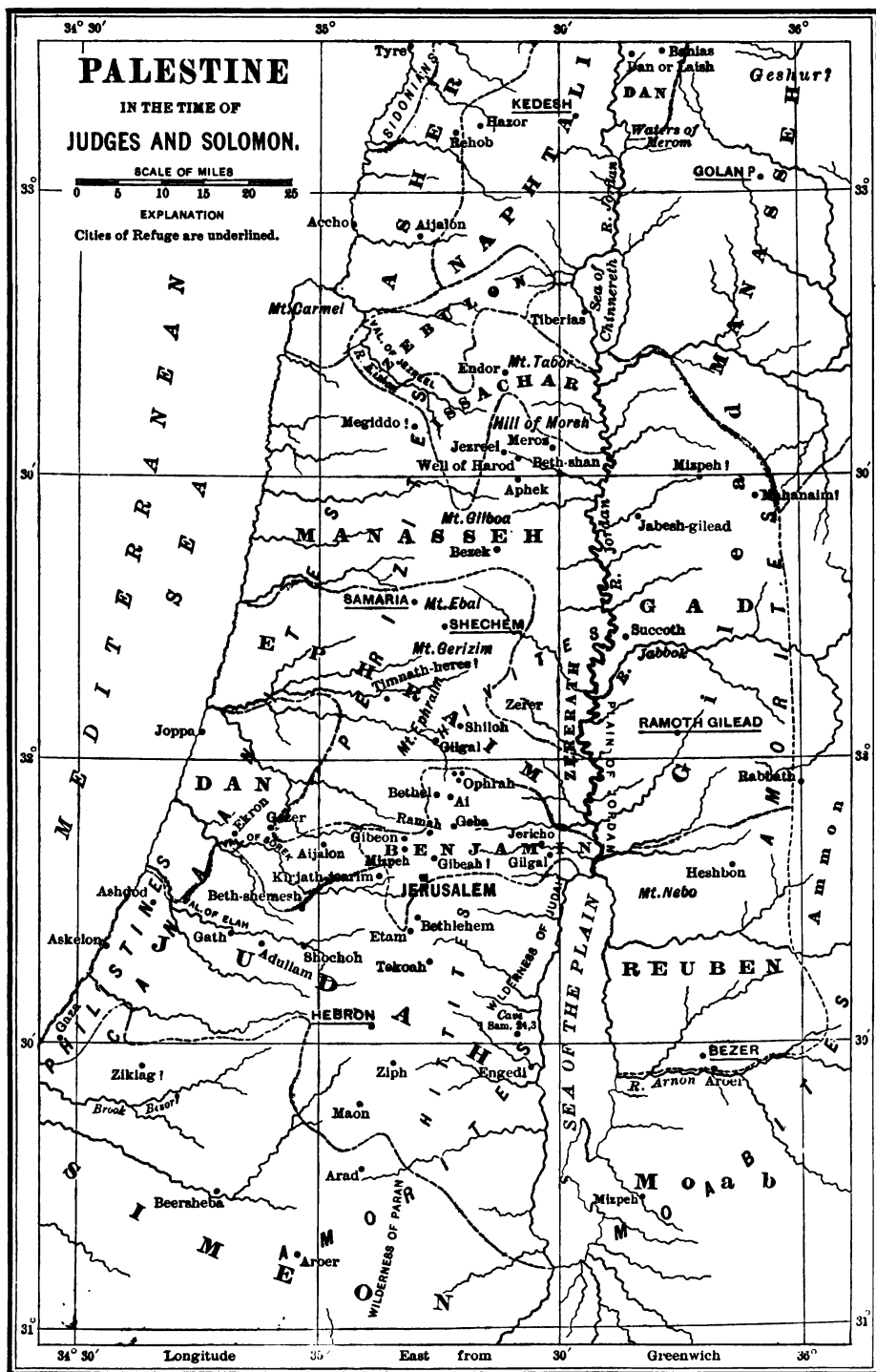
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LESSON I.—JANUARY 6, 1895.

JOHN THE BAPTIST BEHEADED.—MARK 6: 17-29.

Golden Text.—*Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul.*—MATT. 10: 28.

LIFE OF CHRIST.

Early in the third year.
Districts around Galilee.

THE SECTION OF HISTORY belonging to this lesson includes Mark 6: 12-30; Matthew 14: 1-12; Luke 3: 19, 20; 9: 7-9, together with a brief review of the earlier notices of John's mission in all four Gospels.

TIME.—John was imprisoned in March or April, A. D. 28. He was beheaded a year later, in March or April, A. D. 29.

PLACE.—Jesus was in Galilee with his twelve disciples. John was imprisoned and put to death at Macherus, a strong fortress and castle at the southern extremity of Perea, on the borders of Arabia, nine miles east of the northern end of the Dead Sea. The feast held by Herod at which Herodias demanded the head of John the Baptist was probably held in this castle.

JESUS had been preaching more than two years. He was about thirty-two and a half years old.

JOHN preached about two years, from the spring of A. D. 26 to the spring of A. D. 28. He was in prison one year, and was martyred at the age of 33.

PLACE IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.—Early in the third year of his public ministry, in the latter part of the great Galilean division of his ministry.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—A'rētās, or Arētās; Hēr'ōd; Hēr'ōdīās; Māchē'rūs; Pērē'ā; Sālō'mē; Tē'trārch.

INTRODUCTION.—The gospel had made such great progress that the echoes of the wonderful deeds of Jesus, by his word and through his disciples, had reached the court of Herod. The conscience of the guilty king smote him for his murder of the holy prophet John, and made him fear that he had come back to life with new powers much more dangerous to the wicked ruler than his former bold reproofs. This fear on the part of Herod is the occasion for telling here the story of the martyrdom of John.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Persecutor. Herod.—V. 17. The ruler of Galilee and Perea was Herod Antipas, one of the sons of Herod the Great. His mother was a Samaritan. He married a daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia Petraea, just south of Perea; but, becoming acquainted with Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, in Rome, he sent his wife home, and married Herodias while her husband was still living. King Aretas avenged this insult by invading Herod's dominions and defeating him with great loss. It was during the preparations for this war that John was beheaded. Herod remained in Palestine till A. D. 38, when he was banished to Lyons, in France, but eventually died in Spain.

17. For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife; for he had married her.

For Herod himself had 17 sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her.

HEROD'S CHARACTER. "From the first, Herod was a light-minded, unreliable, prodigal, and luxurious prince; hence, also, he proved superstitious and cunning (Luke 13: 32; Mark 8: 15), and on certain occasions, either from folly or weakness, utterly heartless, cruel, and callous."—*Lange*. He was, it is said, a Sadducee, and believed in no future life or resurrection of the dead, yet, by a strange contradiction, his guilty conscience made him believe that Jesus was the murdered John restored to life.

"Nothing is more common than the union of superstition and unbelief. It was said of one of this sort, one of the most learned men of his day (the younger Vossius), that he believed everything but the Bible. I have known persons who have ceased to believe in the divine mission of Jesus afraid to pass a place with which some absurd story of a supernatural appearance was connected. God will, in this way, make many unbelievers witnesses against themselves."—*Expositor's Bible*.

Superstition and unbelief.

II. The Martyr Preacher.—Vs. 17, 18. **HIS LIFE.** (1) John was the son of a priest, Zacharias, and of Elisabeth, also a descendant of Aaron, and was born probably in or near Hebron, in the summer of B. C. 5. He was at this time about thirty years old. (2) *He was a Nazarite*, pledged to drink no wine nor strong drink, and to let his hair and beard grow untrimmed, as a sign of consecration to God. (See Num. 6.) He was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth. (3) *His early life*, up to thirty years of age, was passed in the solitudes of the wilderness of Judea, where he was prepared for his great mission as the forerunner of the Messiah. (4) *His appearance* was like the popular idea of a great prophet raised above caring for temporal things, and protesting against the luxury of the age. He greatly resembled Elijah in his appearance as well as character. (5) *His work* was to prepare the way for the Messiah, as foretold in the prophets (Isa. 40: 3-5). In this work he had been engaged for two years, boldly denouncing sin, and calling to repentance. (6) He was a fearless, consecrated reformer, not destroying, but building up. He was "a tower of strength which stood four-square to all the winds that blow."

HIS REPROOF OF HEROD. 17. **Herod himself.** Not led on by the Pharisees, or other Jewish enemies, but for personal reasons. **Bound him in prison.** "The place of his imprisonment and death, as we learn from Josephus (*Antiquities* XVIII., V., 2), was Macherus, about seven miles from the Dead Sea, on the northeast side." Among mountains higher than those around Jerusalem, rises from a valley "a long flat ridge, more than a mile long and quite difficult of access, all of which was made a strong fortress. From this ridge rises a high, conical hill, the top of which is one hundred yards in diameter, and which was fortified as an impregnable citadel. In this citadel, besides a very deep well, and a very large and deep cemented cistern, are now found 'two dungeons, one of them deep and its sides scarcely broken in,' which have 'small holes still visible in the masonry, where staples of wood and iron had once been fixed. One of these must surely have been the prison house of John the Baptist' (*Tristram*). On this high ridge Herod the Great built an extensive and beautiful palace. The vicinity of the fortress and city was remarkable for mineral fountains, bitter and sweet, hot and cold, whose mingled waters formed baths, good for various diseases." "Altogether, Macherus was a delightful summer residence for the rulers as well as a strong fortress on the boundary between Perea and Arabia."—*Broadus*. **For Herodias' sake.** (1) Because the crime of Herod was with and on account of Herodias, and (2) because Herodias wanted John put out of the way. **For he had married her.**

Castle Macherus.

The crime of the guilty pair was one of manifold malignity and double-dyed turpitude. (1) Herod was married to the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king, but abandoned her for the sake of Herodias. (2) Herodias was the wife of her uncle Philip and older brother of Herod Antipas, but she deserted him, and eloped with the younger brother. (3) Herod was guilty of the basest treachery to his brother. For it was while visiting his brother Philip in Rome that he became acquainted with Herodias, and, as a guest, he plotted against the honor and happiness of one who was both brother and host. (4) Herodias was "an able, ambitious, unprincipled, but bewitching and ensnaring woman." When she married Philip, she probably expected that, as the oldest son of Herod the Great, he would be heir

The Crime of Herod.

18. For John had said unto Herod, it is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

19. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel against him, and would have killed him; but she could not:

20. For Herod feared John, knowing that he was a just man and a holy, and observed him; and when he heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

For John said unto Herod, 18
It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife.

And Herodias set herself 19
against him, and desired to kill him; and she could not;

For Herod feared John, 20
knowing that he was a righteous man and a holy, and kept him safe. And when he heard him, he (a) was much perplexed; and he heard him gladly.

¹ Matt. 14: 5; 21: 26.

(a) Many ancient authorities read *did many things*.

of the whole kingdom; but now "her husband Philip was poor; his brother Antipas was rich. One dwelt in a private station, having been disinherited by his father; the other reigned in the Golden House (of Tiberias). She wished to be a queen; to stand at the head of a court. Hence, her resolution was taken that, as Antipas was the most powerful prince of her race, she would become his queen and wife."—*Hepworth Dixon*. (5) All these crimes were not the mere fruit of a sudden, unexpected storm of temptation; but were made possible by the bad characters and innumerable lesser wickednesses which prepared the way. The tree the storm blows over has almost always rottenness at the root, without which the storm would have raged in vain.

18. For John had said unto Herod. The original is in the imperfect tense, and "seems to mean that John said it repeatedly." He reproofed him for other sins as well as this crowning one (Luke 3: 19). It is not certain whether the reproof was a private and personal one, or a public denunciation. But it was probably both. For John reproofed Herod not merely as a protest against an individual crime, but as a protest against a public crime, which was bringing ruin upon the nation. At that time Herod was probably at his palace at Tiberias, not far from the scene of John's preaching. John took his life in his hand when he, a poor, humble Jew, reproofed the crimes of a reckless tyrant. But this was a test and proof of his sincerity, and gave great power to his preaching. (1) John could not effectively denounce the sins of the people if he let sins in high places go unreprieved. (2) Unrebuked crime in high places teaches, indorses, and propagates crime among the people. It tends to make it fashionable and safe. For how can a ruler punish in others the sins he publicly commits himself? (3) Herod's crime was a public insult to the law of God, to the Jewish nation, to the moral sense of the people. (4) It was bringing untold evils upon the people. Aretas, indignant at the affront Herod had put upon him, had declared war; and at the very time of John's reproof preparations for war were actively going on. John sought to stop the flood of horrors the war would roll upon the people.

III. The Imprisonment.—Vs. 19, 20. 19. Therefore Herodias had a quarrel, or grudge, against him, which imprisonment alone did not satisfy. As in R. v., she set herself against him. As an enemy. Hence, at her instigation, Herod put him in the dungeon. And would have killed him. The only certain way to stop the reproof was to repent or to destroy the reproof. She would not repent, but would kill the physician, as if that would cure the disease. But she could not. She was like Lady Macbeth, continually urging her husband on:—"Infirm of purpose, give me the daggers." She was his evil genius, but she could not succeed as yet in persuading Herod to give the necessary orders. He "let 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would.'"

20. For Herod feared John. As Queen Mary feared John Knox, and Ahab feared Elijah, though urged on by Jezebel. There is nothing so cowardly as a guilty conscience, or so to be feared by evil-doers as a holy man who voices the truth of God. To kill John would be fighting against all the higher unknown powers. He feared him, also, because of his influence with the people (Matt. 14: 5). And observed him. In the sense of keeping John safe, as in the R. v., from the plottings of Herodias.

And when he heard him. "All the verbs are here in the imperfect tense, describing actions continued or repeated from time to time." He seems to have been fascinated by John, whose strong character overawed him at times. He did many things. His conscience being touched, he tried to make a compromise with it by doing a variety of good things from which he would otherwise have abstained.—*Morison*. The R. v. accepts another reading and translates, "he was much perplexed," whether to obey his conscience or to continue in his sins. His

Herod visits John.

21. ¹ And when a convenient day was come, that Herod on his ² birthday made a supper to his lords, high captains, and chief *estates* of Galilee;

22. And when the daughter of the said Herodias came in, and ³ danced, and pleased Herod and them that sat with him, the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give *it* thee.

And when a convenient ²¹ day was come, that Herod on his birthday made a supper to his lords, and the ^(b) high captains, and the chief men of Galilee:

And when ^(c) the daughter ²² of Herodias herself came in and danced, ^(d) she pleased Herod and them that sat at meat with him; and the king said unto the damsel, Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, and I will give it thee.

¹ Matt. 14: 6.
² Gen. 40: 20.

³ Isa. 3: 16.

(b) Or, *military tribunes*. Gr., *chiliarchs*. (d) Or, *it*.

(c) Some ancient authorities read *his daughter Herodias*.

soul was distracted. He wanted to kill John to please Herodias, and yet his conscience held him back. "He had not strength enough for a great crime, but he had feebleness enough for it; for he who joins in the dance of the graces may give his hand to the furies unawares." And heard him gladly. "This guilty man, disquieted by the reproaches of memory and the demands of conscience, found it a relief to hear stern truth, and to see from far the beautiful light of righteousness. It was so that Italian brigands used to maintain a priest. And it is so that fraudulent tradesmen too frequently pass for religious men. People cry shame on their hypocrisy. Yet perhaps they less often wear a mask to deceive others than a cloak to keep their own hearts warm, and should not be quoted to prove that religion is a deceit, but as witnesses that even the most worldly soul craves as much of it as he can assimilate."—G. W. Chadwick.

During the long and hard imprisonment, John the Baptist had a period of discouragement. Almost all men of great and stirring deeds have had their seasons of discouragement and depression. For example, *John's Discouragement*. Moses, David, Elijah. Almost every worker for God has at some time been with Bunyan's Christian in the Castle of Giant Despair. Some of the reasons were physical weakness in a damp, dreary dungeon, a reaction from his exciting labors, the apparent failure of his life's work, a seeming desertion by God himself, who permitted his messenger to suffer for his very faithfulness, the, to him, unaccountable neglect by Jesus who could work miracles for every one but him. But Jesus sent, by his two disciples, a message of cheer and power (Matt. 11: 4-6; Luke 7: 20-23).

IV. The Birth
for the purpose



Dancing Girl.

day Festival.—Vs. 21-23. 21. A convenient day; *i. e.*, which Herodias cherished; not for Herod's feast, which took place at the fixed time. Made a supper, or banquet feast. The supper was the chief meal of the day, taken toward or at evening, and often prolonged into the night. To his lords, the nobles and state officers. High captains, Greek "commanders of thousands." The highest officers of the army. Chief estates, chief men, of Galilee, who came from that part of his kingdom to celebrate the day.

22. The daughter of the said Herodias: *or*, of Herodias herself, even of the queen; a note of indignation! Not a common dancing girl, but her own daughter was put to this degrading task, for the accomplishment of her malignant purpose. — *Schaff*. Her name, according to Josephus, was *Sālōmē*, a daughter by Philip, Herod's brother. Came in, and danced, usually with the accompaniment of tambourines or bells attached to the fingers, and with songs. "Dancing women were abundant, and in such banquets it was common for them to appear, transparently robed, and execute voluptuous and impure suggestive dances. This was the Roman fashion. It was the work of her mother, too, who was adapting her wives to the man she had to play upon."—*American Commentary*. And pleased Herod and them that sat with him, or, rather, reclined at the tables, according to their custom. They were doubtless half intoxicated. "The wine and drunkenness of to-day, bad as they are, are but the preserved remnant of the ancient horrid riotous revels. In the East to-day, however, are preserved in high life some things which remind us of that passage in Plato's Symposium which is prefaced by a warning to modest hearers to

23. And he sware unto her, ¹ Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give *it* thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

24. And she went forth, and said unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John the Baptist.

25. And she came in straightway with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, ² I will that thou give me by and by in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

26. And the king was exceeding sorry; *yet* for his oath's sake, and for their sakes which sat with him, he would not reject her.

And he sware unto her, ²³ Whatsoever thou shalt ask of me, I will give it thee, unto the half of my kingdom.

And she went out, and said ²⁴ unto her mother, What shall I ask? And she said, The head of John (e) the Baptist.

And she came in straight- ²⁵ way with haste unto the king, and asked, saying, I will that thou forthwith give me in a charger the head of John the Baptist.

And the king was exceed- ²⁶ ing sorry; but for the sake of his oaths, and of them that sat at meat, he would not reject her.

¹ Esther 5: 3, 6; 7: 2.

² Psa. 37: 12, 14.

(e) Gr., *the Baptist*.

withdraw. The Eastern feasts, generally, however, have no ladies present — except the dancers.”— *Prof. Isaac H. Hall*. Ask of me whatsoever thou wilt, some rich jewel, or palace, or city was probably in his thoughts.

23. Unto the half of my kingdom, the promise of a man from whom wine had driven out his wit.

A KINGDOM FOR A DANCE. Herod was willing to give away half of his kingdom for the sight of an immoral dance. Poor fool! But how many in our day give away the whole kingdom of their souls, with health and hope, prosperity, peace, and goodness, — yea, the whole kingdom of heaven, — for the paltry price of a glass of wine; the pleasure of the table; the gratification of passion or pride; the acquisition of a little money. The race of Esau still thrives who sell their birthright for a mess of pottage.

V. **The Wicked Request.** — Vs. 24-26. 24. Said unto her mother, What shall I ask? This was the question the mother was waiting for, though the daughter probably did not know it. Herod drunk might do what Herod sober had refused.

WHAT SHALL I ASK? Here is an illustration of the mother's power to lead her child to good or evil. Every child in effect says to its mother, What shall I ask, — ask of God, of life, of the future; shall it be earthly good or heavenly good, sin or righteousness, heaven or hell? And the mother, consciously or not, is, by words, by example, by training, by spirit, answering this question, and putting forward her child to good or evil.

25. She came in straightway with haste, urged on by her mother, and excited and disturbed by so strange and horrible a request. If she had taken time to think, even though “she shared the furies of her race,” she could not have made this request, any more than a sober Herod could have granted it. Give me by and by, immediately, on the instant, lest Herod change his mind. “We hardly recognize in this word ‘by and by,’ so much has its meaning altered, St. Mark's familiar ‘forthwith’ or ‘immediately.’ At the period when our version was made, it was, however (as we find in Shakespeare), in common use as an equivalent.”— *Ellicott*. In a charger, or large dish or platter. Here, no doubt, the “charger” was a royal dish of silver or gold. The head of John the Baptist. An intimation that the sight of it would be a feast to her mother and herself. — *Morison*.

26. The king was exceeding sorry. Not penitent, but worried and troubled. (1) Because he was outwitted and forced to do what he had repeatedly refused. (2) The act was too horrible even for his conscience. He had an unknown dread of the holy man, especially as he had become acquainted with him during the year's imprisonment. (3) He was afraid that murdering John might create a rebellion, or at least arouse so strong an opposition on the part of the people as to cripple him in his war against Aretas. As a matter of fact, “he was soon afterwards defeated by Aretas with great slaughter, and never



Girl with Charger.

27. And immediately the king sent an executioner, and commanded his head to be brought: and he went and beheaded him in the prison,

28. And brought his head in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

29. And when his disciples heard of it, they came and ¹ took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

And straightway the king 27 sent forth a soldier of his guard, and commanded to bring his head: and he went and beheaded him in the prison, and brought his head 28 in a charger, and gave it to the damsel; and the damsel gave it to her mother.

And when his disciples 29 heard *thereof*, they came and took up his corpse, and laid it in a tomb.

¹ Acts 8: 3.

prospered after beheading John." Yet for his oath's sake. It should be *oaths*', not *oath's*, which is a printer's or editor's error. The word is plural in the original. (See R. V.)—*Morison*. And for their sakes which sat with him. The guests had heard the oaths, and it would make him seem a perjurer and fickle and mean if he disregarded his public promise. Pride and fear of public opinion turned the scale, for John would have few friends in that assembly. Probably if the oaths had been secret, he would not have hesitated to break such oaths. Especially since Salome asked a great deal more than the half of his kingdom which he had promised. The power of public opinion is mighty for good or for ill. He would not reject her. A free phrase, meaning to *repudiate her demand*, or to *deny her request*. Was it right in Herod, it has often been asked, to choose not to deny Salome, and consequently to murder John? It is sufficient to answer that it can never be right to do wrong. But what, then, of the obligation of his oaths? They could not bind him to do wrong. No power in the universe can ever make it right to do wrong. But is it not doing wrong to violate an oath? No, if the oath were itself entirely wrong. The making of such an oath is the first wrong-doing; the keeping of it is the second. When one has begun wrong, repentance, as even Seneca teaches, is more honorable than pertinacity.—*Morison*.

27. Immediately the king sent an executioner, a soldier of his body guard. Sudden death, with the briefest pain, is not so sad a thing for a good man. The prayer in the Episcopal Liturgy to be delivered "from sudden death" is taken as meaning death unprepared for; that is sad.

28. Brought his head in a charger. "It was not uncommon to bring the head of one who had been slain to the person who ordered it, as a sure proof that the command had been obeyed. When the head of Cicero was brought to Fulvia, the wife of Antony, she spat upon it, and, drawing out the tongue that had so eloquently opposed and condemned Antony, she pierced it with her hair-pin, with bitter gibes. Jerome refers to this incident, and says that Herodias did likewise with the head of John."—*Broadus*. And the damsel gave it to her mother. Now, at last, she thinks, that reproving voice shall be heard no more. But the sight of that bleeding head would never cease to burn her soul. The memory of that voice and its reproofs would grow clearer and clearer, and, like Poe's raven, would cease nevermore.

29. His disciples, John's disciples, came and took up his corpse, which had been thrown out. They buried it, and went and told Jesus (Matthew), to whom John had ever pointed them. Their sorrow brought them to the Saviour.

VI. The Martyr's Success. There is a lesson of marvellous impressiveness in the contrast between the success of Herod and that of John. Herod seemed to succeed, and John to fail; but in reality the exact opposite is the truth.

HEROD'S SUCCESS. He was a king. He had slain his enemy. He had applause and honor. But from this moment began for Herod Antipas a series of annoyances and misfortunes, which only culminated in his death years afterwards in disrowned royalty and unpitied exile. "Our pleasant vices," it has well been said, "are made the instruments to punish us." (1) He was soon after this defeated in battle by Aretas, with great loss. (2) Later on, Herodias stirred up her husband to go to Rome and obtain from the emperor the title of king. But, being followed by complaints of the oppressed Galileans, the result was that he was deposed from his tetrarchy even. (3) Then he was banished to Lyons, in France, and afterwards to Spain, Herodias accompanying him in his exile. They died in banishment. (4) Herod is pilloried in history. All ages see this crime, like Cain's mark on his forehead. (5) He was haunted by the terrors of a guilty conscience. The

Roman Poet Persius illustrates by Herod "the effect of superstitious fear in marring all the pleasures of pride and luxurious pomp." The memory of his crime doubtless haunted him, as Banquo's ghost haunted Macbeth with its silent horror.

The weariest and most loathed worldly life
That age, ache, penury, and imprisonment
Can lay on Nature, is a paradise
To what we fear of death.

— *Measure for Measure.*

My conscience had a thousand several tongues,
And every tongue brings in a several tale,
And every tale condemns me for a villain.

— *Shakespeare.*

Conscience is a thousand swords.

— *Richard III.*

JOHN'S SUCCESS. (1) John finished the work that was given him to do. His life was a completed whole. Had he lived longer, he would have marred the perfection of this work. After the Messiah had come and was established, the work of the forerunner was ended.

That life is long which answers life's great end. — *Young.*

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;
In feelings, not in figures on a dial. He most lives
Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best. — *Bailey.*

(2) "The martyrdom of John is his strongest sermon, heard and felt everywhere. He still precedes Christ in every revival, as repentance must precede forgiveness." His martyrdom set this light on a hill for all the world to see. It rang the bell hidden in a tower, so that all men must hear his message. So Bishop Latimer, bound to the stake, said to Bishop Ridley, "We shall light such a candle, by God's grace, in England this day, as I trust shall never be put out again." (3) He really lives in the life of Christianity; he triumphs in its triumphs. (4) No man is a failure who retains his manhood and his character untarnished, whatever else he may lose. (5) In heaven John wears the victor's crown, and dwells forever in the joy of his Lord.

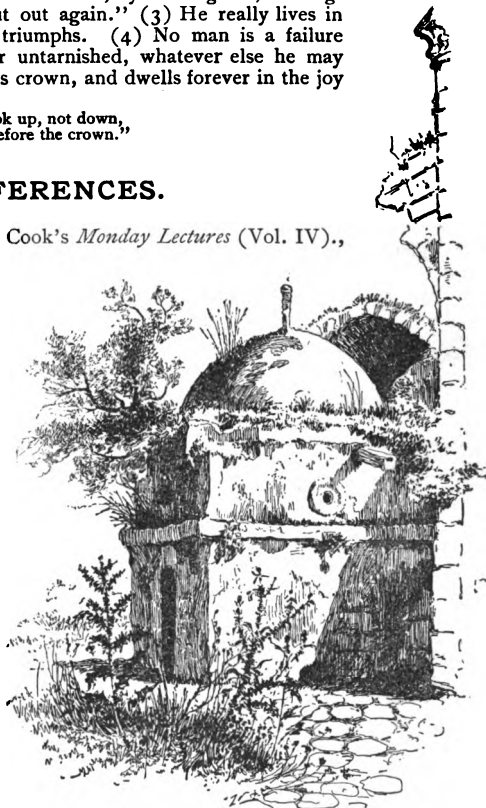
"Bidding our hearts look up, not down,
While the cross fades before the crown."

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

On the power of conscience, see Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures* (Vol. IV.), "Conscience," where are brought together illustrations from a wide range of literature. Shakespeare's *Richard III.* and *Macbeth*, Hudson's *Lectures on Shakespeare's Macbeth*, Scott's *Marmion*, Hood's *Poems*, "Dream of Eugene Aram," Poe's "Raven" contain striking illustrations. Foster's *Cyclopædia of Illustrations*, Vol. I., 938; *Sermons* by Robertson, Vol. IV., p. 332; E. T. Fitch, and Francis Atterbury, in *Masterpieces of Pulpit Eloquence*, on "The death of John the Baptist"; *Herodotus*, Vol. III., p. 31.

INDUCTIVE TEACHINGS.

I. THE GUILTY CONSCIENCE. (1) All persons have within them a conscience, which is the voice of God. (2) This conscience can give to the evil-doer the sharpest pain of which the soul is capable. (3) It may be silenced for a time, put to sleep by false doctrines, unheard amid the din of business and of pleasure, (4) but there comes a time when it awakes. A simple word, an unusual appearance, some foretaste of disaster touches the soul as



Reputed Tomb of St. John (Samaria).

with a magic wand, and wakes it from its slumber. (5) "There is no evil that we cannot either face or flee from but the consciousness of duty disregarded. It is omnipresent, like the Deity. We cannot escape its power nor fly from its presence."—*Daniel Webster*.

2. The only hope for a guilty conscience is in the redeeming love of Jesus, of whom John was the forerunner. No regrets that, like Herod's, are weaker than the fear of man, no washing of hands like Pilate's, no tears like Esau's, "not all the perfumes of Arabia," can cleanse the guilty soul.

3. Compare the scripture characters, — Jezebel, who tried to kill Elijah; Esau, who sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; and Judas, who sold his Master for thirty pieces of silver.

4. The true minister will reprove the sins of the great and the powerful who are bringing injury upon the people.

5. But he must expect enmity and trouble. Virtue does not always receive its reward in this world, nor in worldly peace and plenty.

6. The family is the most powerful influence for good or evil.

7. "Good inclinations, veneration for holiness in others, and ineffectual struggles against our own vices do not guarantee salvation. He who feels them is not God-forsaken, since every such emotion is a grace." Nothing but a choice of good, when it costs to be good, proves real goodness.

8. It is a bad conscience which is powerful enough to vex, but not enough to restrain.

9. It is the sign of a weak man to be afraid to be thought weak.

10. Strong drink and passion lead to the most foolish actions and reckless expenditure.

11. Many a person gives away, not half his kingdom, but his whole kingdom, — his life, his peace, his virtue, his soul, — for a temporary pleasure.

12. The mother often decides the fate of her children. They say to her, What shall we ask? And the mother's answer leads to heaven or hell.

13. Any life is a success which retains its integrity, and fulfils its mission. "Better fifty years of Europe than a cycle of Cathay." Better fifty days of service that moves the world upward and onward than a century of peaceful uselessness.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

BRIEFLY REVIEW the life of Christ up to this time, and put this event in its proper place. NOTE the circumstances. POINT OUT the place on the map.

SUBJECT: THE MARTYR'S WORK AND CROWN.

I. JOHN'S LIFE, WORK, AND CHARACTER. A brief review; a vivid picture made, like Doré's, with a few bold strokes.

II. JOHN'S REPROOF OF HEROD. Its causes, its boldness, its necessity.

Illustrations. Luther, when pressed to stay away from the Diet at Worms, where he was to be tried for heresy, said to the messenger, "Go, tell your master that, though there should be as many devils as there are tiles on its roofs, I would enter it." And, again, of his mortal enemy, Duke George, "If I had business at Leipzig, I would ride into Leipzig, though it rained Duke Georges for nine days running."

Mahomet, when his uncle, Abu Thaleb, pressed him to be silent, and not anger the chief people by his utterances, answered that if the sun stood on his right hand and the moon on his left, ordering him to hold his peace, he could not obey.

Socrates, when condemned to death, said, "Athenians, I will obey God, rather than you; and if you would let me go, and give me my life on condition that I should no more teach my fellow-citizens, sooner than agree to your proposals, I would prefer to die a thousand times."—*Plato*, "Apology," p. 23.

III. JOHN IMPRISONED. Place. Bitterness of the confinement. How long. His period of discouragement. Herod's conduct during this period. Herod's character. The verses previous to the lesson.

IV. JOHN A MARTYR. Picture the birthday feast, and the way in which Herodias gained her end. Effect of drunkenness, power of a mother over her child, "afraid to do right."

V. JOHN'S CROWN OF SUCCESS. Contrast the two lives—of Herod and of John. Herod had peace no more. He had murdered peace.

Illustration. "How Herod was haunted by the ghost of his sin—recall the witness

of Abel's blood from the ground against Cain; and the self-reproaches of Joseph's brethren, when the memory of their sin came upon them in after years. Reference should be made to the poem of Eugene Aram; to the night scene in Macbeth, where Lady Macbeth tries to cleanse her guilty hands; and to the story of the man who, to gain an inheritance, flung his brother into the sea, and, ever after, when he looked upon water, saw his brother's dead face staring up from the depths. There is one stone in the floor of an old church in Scotland which stares out at you blood-red from the gray stones around it. The legend tells of a murder committed there, and of repeated fruitless attempts to cover the tell-tale color of that stone. Morally, the legend is true; every dead sin sends its ghost to haunt the soul of the guilty."—*H. C. Trumbull.*

Shakespeare represents Richard III. as seeing a vision in his sleep just before his last battle, in which appear the ghosts of those whom he had murdered. One by one they come, rehearse the crimes he had committed upon them, and cry, "Despair and die. Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow."

John's life a success, accomplishing a glorious purpose, and setting in motion a never ending influence. God came to him in prison. He spoke to Jeremiah in prison, and gave wonderful revelations to John the Apostle in exile. The valley of humiliation and of the shadow of death is often the way to the land of Beulah and the Delectable Mountains. Often from a pillow of stones come, as to Jacob at Bethel, the brightest visions of the soul. From weariness, and pain, and trouble arise the steps that lead to heaven. Stephen, when stoned by a mob, saw the heaven opened, and Jesus on the right hand of God. Paul from a Roman prison saw his crown of righteousness.

Illustration.

MEN WANTED.

"The world wants *men*—large-hearted, manly men;
Men who shall join its chorus, and prolong
The psalm of labor and the psalm of love.
The age wants *heroes*—heroes who shall dare
To struggle in the solid ranks of truth:
To clutch the monster error by the throat;
To bear opinion to a loftier seat;
To blot the error of oppression out,
And lead a universal freedom in.
And heaven wants *souls*—fresh and capacious souls,
To ease its raptures, and expand, like flowers,

Beneath the glory of its central sun.
It wants fresh souls—not lean and shrivelled ones;
It wants fresh souls, my brother—*give it thine,*
If thou indeed wilt be what scholars should;
If thou wilt be a hero, and wilt strive
To help thy fellow and exalt thyself,
Thy feet, at last, shall stand on jasper floors;
Thy heart, at last, shall seem a thousand hearts—
Each single heart with myriad raptures filled—
While thou shalt sit with princes and with kings,
Rich in the jewel of a ransomed soul."

LESSON II.—JANUARY 13.

FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND.—MARK 6: 30-44.

Golden Text.—*He hath filled the hungry with good things.*—LUKE 1: 53.

Third year of Public Ministry.—April.
Districts around Galilee.

THE SECTION includes the lesson and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matthew 14: 13-21;

Luke 9: 10-17; John 6: 1-14.

TIME.—April, A. D. 29. Immediately following the last lesson, and just before the Passover (John 6: 4), which that year began April 16.

PLACE.—The plain of Butaiha, belonging to Bethsaida (Luke 9: 10), a "desert"; i. e., an uncultivated, uninhabited place, a short distance southeast of Bethsaida, on the northeast shore of the Sea of Galilee. Bethsaida was a double town, situated on either side of the Jordan at its entrance into the sea. "The plain of Butaiha forms a triangle, of which the eastern mountains make one side, and the river bank and the lake shore the other two. It was at the southeastern angle of this plain, where the hills come down close to the shore, that Thomson places the site of the feeding of the five thousand."—*Andrews.*

RULERS.—Tiberius Cæsar, emperor of Rome (sixteenth year); Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea (third year); Herod Antipas, of Galilee and Perea (thirty-third year); Herod Philip, of Trachonitis, etc. (thirty-third year).

NOTE. The importance of this miracle is shown by the fact that it is the only one recorded by all four evangelists.

30. ¹ And the apostles gathered themselves together unto Jesus, and told him all things, both what they had done, and what they had taught.

31. ² And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: ³ for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

32. And they departed into a desert place by ship privately.

And the apostles gather themselves together unto Jesus; and they told him all things, whatsoever they had done, and whatsoever they had taught.

And he saith unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while. For there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

And they went away in the 32 boat to a desert place apart.

¹ Luke 9: 10.² Matt. 14: 13.³ Mark 3: 20.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Missionaries' Report.—V. 30. A few weeks before the martyrdom of John the Baptist, Jesus had sent out his disciples among the villages of Galilee, he himself going also (Mark 6: 12, 13; Matt. 11: 1). They went everywhere, preaching the gospel and healing the sick, apparently with great success. But when the news of the death of John reached them, they seem to have been overwhelmed, and gathered themselves together unto Jesus, probably at his usual center of work, Capernaum. Here they told him all things. How delightful this confidence! They told him of their failures and of their successes; of their wisdom and of their folly; of their reliance and of their unbelief. — *J. Angus, D.D.* So should we go and tell Jesus all we do and speak. (1) It will comfort us to have his sympathy. (2) It will make us feel more clearly that we are workers together with him. (3) It will keep us from those things we are unwilling to tell. (4) It will bring us into more intimate friendship and acquaintance with Jesus.

Go and tell Jesus.

II. Jesus and His Disciples Retire from Herod's Dominion.—Vs. 31, 32. 31. Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, not a barren, sandy place, but one uninhabited, wild pasture, or woodland. There were two chief reasons for this course. THE FIRST, given by Matthew (14: 13), was on account of the news of John's death. In the excitement Herod might seek to imprison or murder Jesus and his disciples, who were equally with John opposed to Herod's crimes. And there was danger of a political revolt, which was entirely contrary to the plans and purposes of Jesus, but which might center around his person. We see how the people tried to make him a king immediately after the feeding of the five thousand (John 6: 15). Jesus, too, saw his own fate foreshadowed in the death of his cousin and forerunner. He needed refreshment and comfort, and possibly there was another fierce battle with the tempter, for he spent a large part of the next night in lonely prayer.

THE SECOND REASON is here given. And rest a while, after their severe labors and excited interest on account of John. They could not rest at Capernaum, for in these exciting times there were many coming and going, perhaps anxious to know what course Jesus would take. "The door stood always open, as in Eastern houses generally, for all who chose to come in or leave at their pleasure." — *Geikie*. They needed this restful retirement (1) for physical rest; (2) for instruction in review of their labors; (3) for communion with God; (4) for that wider and truer view of their work which comes from seeing it as a whole, as a landscape is seen from a mountain top. No one can do his best work without periods of rest from work. Every tree and plant must have its resting time. We put our hyacinths in the dark a few weeks if we would have them bloom well. There is a kind of crystalizing process, an "unconscious cerebration," going on in the mind and in the soul during these periods of rest. Moreover, the fountain needs often filling if it would flow freely, and we cry out: —

Periods of Rest.

"O bliss of blisses, to be freed
From all the cares with which this world is driven,

With liberty and endless time to read
The libraries of heaven."

32. And they departed into a desert place, in the region of Bethsaida Julius (Luke 9: 10), just over the Jordan from Herod's dominions. By ship, by a boat.

33. And the people saw them departing, and many knew him, and ran afoot thither out of all cities, and outwent them, and came together unto him.

34. And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, ¹ and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: ² and he began to teach them many things.

And the people saw them ³³ going, and many knew them, and they ran there together (a) on foot from all the cities, and outwent them.

And he came forth and saw ³⁴ a great multitude, and he had compassion on them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

¹ Matt. 9: 36; 14: 14.

² Luke 9: 11.

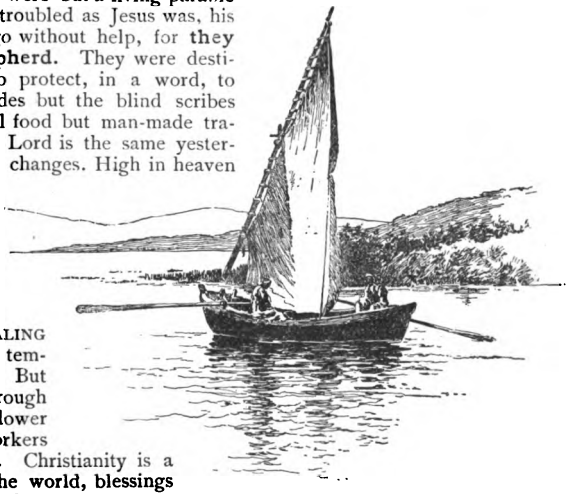
(a) Or, by land.

III. Great Multitudes Follow Him.—V. 33. The people saw them departing, and knew by the direction the boat took toward what part of the lake they were going. Some recognized them and reported to others. **Ran afoot**, that is by land, in contrast with the disciples in the boat. This was doubtless early in the morning. **Out of all cities**, such as Capernaum, Chorazin, and Bethsaida. They ran round by the head of the lake, taking one of the fords of the river, so as to meet Jesus, who was crossing with the twelve by ship. They probably could watch the boat in which Jesus was the whole way. The circumstance that the Passover was nigh at hand (John), so that many must have been starting on their journey to Jerusalem round the lake and through Perea, partly accounts for the concourse of such multitudes.

THE ATTRACTION. John says they went because of his *miracles*, or, rather, as in the original, “signs”; (1) some were attracted by the signs of God’s presence, and power, and love; signs or evidences of Jesus’ divine mission, and the truths that he taught; they met an inward need; others (2) by curiosity and wonder; or (3) by his teachings which accompanied his miracles; (4) by a desire to be with the great prophet, and perhaps aid, or at least have a part in the coming of his kingdom; (5) some, doubtless, had special needs, or were friends of the sick, whom they desired to have cured. The way to draw crowds to the gospel is to have something which men need, in a form that appeals to their hungering souls. There is little use in ringing the bell, be it never so loud, to call men to empty tables. Let the sun shine, and men come to its warmth.

IV. Jesus Teaches the Multitude, and Heals the Sick.—V. 34. Jesus . . . was moved with compassion toward them. The crowds were ignorant, restless, sinful. They had brought also their sick, who were but a living parable of their spiritual state. Weary and troubled as Jesus was, his heart could not let the multitudes go without help, for they were as sheep not having a shepherd. They were destitute of teachers to feed, to guide, to protect, in a word, to shepherd them. “They had no guides but the blind scribes and Pharisees. They had no spiritual food but man-made traditions. Let us never forget that our Lord is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He never changes. High in heaven at God’s right hand, he still pities the ignorant and them that are out of the way.”—*Ryle*. He began, at once, to teach them. This was their greatest need. He also healed “them that had need of healing” (Luke 9: 11).

NOTE THAT TEACHING AND HEALING WENT TOGETHER. Jesus knows our temporal wants as well as our spiritual. But now, as then, he ever leads us through earthly to spiritual blessings. The lower are the means to the higher. All workers for Jesus must follow this example. Christianity is a river of blessings flowing through the world, blessings to the bodies and minds, as well as the souls of men.



A Fishing Boat on the Sea of Galilee.

35. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, This is a desert place, and now the time *is* far passed :

36. Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread : for they have nothing to eat.

37. He answered and said unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, ¹ Shall we go and buy two hundred pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

38. He saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came unto him, and said, The place is desert, and the day is now far spent :

Send them away, that they ³⁶ may go into the country and villages round about, and buy themselves somewhat to eat.

But he answered and said ³⁷ unto them, Give ye them to eat. And they say unto him, Shall we go and buy two hundred (δ) pennyworth of bread, and give them to eat?

And he saith unto them, ³⁸ How many loaves have ye? go and see. And when they knew, they say, Five, and two fishes.

¹ Num. 11: 13, 22. 2 Kings 4: 43. Matt. 15: 34. Mark 8: 4. (δ) Greek coin worth about seventeen cents.

And blessing the body is a proof of its power to bless the soul, and of the sincerity of those who teach and preach.

V. Jesus Communes with His Disciples. From John (6: 3), we learn that Jesus did not spend all his time with the multitudes, but went up on the mountain side, and sat with his disciples, the usual posture of teaching. Here they could rest, and talk over their evangelizing tour, their plans, their successes, their mistakes, and receive the instruction they would soon need as to the true way of preaching the gospel to the world, and as to the gospel they should preach. This may have been in the afternoon, after he had taught and healed the people; or it is quite as probable this was the center of his healing and teaching, a little apart from the careless crowds, where those who were anxious to learn could come, and the sick could be brought. In the intervals Jesus could converse with his disciples.

VI. The Hungering Multitudes. — Vs. 35-38. 35. When the day was now far spent. The first evening (Matt. 14: 15) had come, which began at three o'clock. The disciples came unto him. The fuller conversation is given in John.

36. Send them away . . . buy themselves. Many of these were Passover pilgrims and had no homes, but must buy their food. They must go soon, or it would be too late.

37. Give ye them to eat. This Jesus said to prove them (John), whether they had such faith in him as the Messiah as to believe that he could supply the multitude with food, as Moses did the Israelites in the wilderness with manna, or as Elijah supplied the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17: 13-16). "This gives us a glimpse into the educational method of the great teacher." — *Watkins*. "This is sweet comfort, — Jesus knows." — *Spurgeon*.

PROVING is intended to have a double result: (1) to show what one is, and (2), by this process of testing, to strengthen the good. Life to us is a probation and an education. A probation by the very process of educating, and education by the process of proving. It is easy to seem to trust when the coffers are full, but the test of faith is when we do not know whence the future supply is coming. **Two hundred pennyworth of bread.** A penny was a silver coin worth fifteen to seventeen cents. But, being the price of a day laborer's wages, it was equivalent to \$1.50 or \$2.00 a day.

THE HUNGERING MULTITUDES. A large part of the world is like this desert, full of people perishing of hunger. They need eternal life; they need to have their souls nourished and strengthened; they need to be satisfied with love, and forgiveness, and hope, and faith, and courage; they are dying for want of the bread of life.

GIVE YE THEM TO EAT. Brethren, the day is wearing away; this is a desert place; there are hungry, perishing multitudes around us, and Christ is saying to us all, "Give ye them to eat." Say not "We cannot; we have nothing to give." Go to your duty, every man, and trust yourselves to him; for he will give you all supply just as fast as you need it. — *Horace Bushnell*. The food is from God, but he has put it in our homes to distribute; and whatever we have, be it never so small, we must give to satisfy the world's hunger.

VII. The Miracle of the Loaves. — Vs. 38-42. 38. How many loaves have ye? Thin cakes, baked on the side of the oven, like large crackers. "The native bread we saw in Palestine was as large as a medium-sized plate, one quarter to one third inch thick, baked firm, but not brittle." — *Geo. M. Adams, D. D.* And when they knew.

39. And he commanded them to make all sit down by companies upon the green grass.

40. And they sat down in ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

41. And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and ¹ blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

And he commanded them 39 that all should (c) sit down by companies upon the green grass.

And they sat down in 40 ranks, by hundreds, and by fifties.

And he took the five loaves 41 and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake the loaves; and he gave to the disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all.

¹ 1 Sam. 9: 13. Luke 24: 30.

(c) Gr., *recline*.

They found a small boy (John), who had **five**, and **two fishes**. The Greek *opsarion* is a diminutive; it properly means what was eaten along with the bread, and specially refers to the small and generally dried or pickled fish eaten with bread, like our "sardines," or the "caviar" of Russia, the pickled herrings of Holland and Germany. Millions were caught in the lake. We know that both the salting and pickling of them was a special industry among its fishermen. — *Ederheim*.

Well did the disciples add, according to John's account (R. V.), "but what are these among so many?"

WHAT ARE THESE AMONG SO MANY? And still we ask the same question, as we stand in the presence of the evils to be overcome, the work to be done, the multitudes to be converted to Christ, the power of the enemy. If, indeed, "these" were all, if there were no Holy Spirit, no omnipotent Christ working in and through them, then our efforts would be but "to dam the Nile with bulrushes," or irrigate Sahara with a garden hose.

39. And he commanded them to make all sit down, or recline, as in the Greek, the customary posture for eating. There were five thousand men, besides women and children (Matt.), who, according to oriental usage, sat apart from the men. **By companies**, symposia, banqueting parties. **Upon the green grass**, of which there was much (John). It was the beautiful fresh spring-time, the Easter season.

40. And they sat down in ranks. The Greek means a garden bed, a parterre of flowers. "Five thousand men, reclining in this orderly arrangement along the green slope of the mountain, must have spread over an extensive space, probably several acres, and as the afternoon sun shone on their bright-hued oriental garments, they looked like beds in a flower garden." — *Broadus*. **By hundreds, and by fifties**. Either the companies consisted some of one hundred, and others of fifty, each arranged on three sides of a square, according to Roman custom; or they were arranged in rows, or tiers, so that looking one way there were fifty hundreds, and in the other one hundred fifties, with sufficient intervals for the passing of food.

41. He looked up to heaven, thus recognizing the Giver of all. "In prayer we should use such outward gestures as may most fitly serve to express the inward disposition and holy affections of our heart and soul." — *Petters*. President Hopkins used to tell his students that whosoever neglected the appropriate expressions of worship would soon lose also the spirit of worship. **And blessed**, blessed God, and blessed the food. St. John says "gave thanks." The two expressions are different parts of the same act.

"'Twas seedtime when he blessed the bread,
'Twas harvest when he brake."



Supposed Site of Bethsaida.

42. And they did all eat, and were filled.
 43. And they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.
 44. And they that did eat of the loaves were about five thousand men.

And they did all eat, and were filled.

And they took up broken pieces, twelve basketfuls, and also of the fishes.

And they that ate the loaves were five thousand men.

ASKING THE BLESSING BEFORE MEALS. "Asking a blessing upon food before meal was a universal custom among the Jews, and was practised both by Christ and by the apostles (Luke 22: 17, 19; 24: 30; Acts 27: 35)." — *Abbott*. It is a most appropriate and helpful custom, and should be universal. Its spirit sanctifies the act of eating, transfigures it, even more than bright conversation renders it "the feast of reason, and the flow of soul." It was held by the Jews that "He who partakes of anything without giving thanks acts as if he were stealing it from God." Why specially over food? Because food is the basis of life, the source of supply for all other things, so that all are included under it. The formulæ in such cases were commonly short and simple, like our own, such, *e. g.*, "May God, the ever-blessed one, bless what he has given us." — *Ellicott*. On an old testament that belonged to the Wesleys is found the following grace, by John Cennick: —

"Be present at our table, Lord;
 Be here and everywhere adored;

These mercies bless, and grant that we
 May feast in paradise with thee."

Gave them to his disciples to set before them. "*Blessed* and *brake* are in the tense which describes a single act; *gave* is in that which describes a continuous repeated action. The pieces grew under his touch, and the disciples always found his hands full when they came back with their own empty." — *Maclaren*. Others, as Dr. Hovey, think that the multiplication took place as the disciples distributed the bread. As to the process, it is useless to conjecture. "In turning *water* into *wine*, changes of *months* were compressed into *moments*. But grain, by no natural process, can unfold itself into *bread*. We can conceive of an acorn, by degrees, unfolding itself into an oak. But an acorn cannot unfold itself into a *carved column* of oak." — *Van Doren*.

THE DISCIPLES CO-WORKING WITH JESUS. Jesus could have rained down manna, so that each person could have picked up enough just before him to supply all his needs. But he chose to work in such a way that there must be co-operation on the part of his disciples before the multitude could be fed. He takes the disciples into partnership with him. "A beautiful illustration and foreshadowing of their future work of bearing the bread of life to perishing sinners." — *G. W. Clark*. The disciples had the privilege, as all disciples still have, of being the almoners of Jesus, distributing his good gifts to their fellow-men. Ministers never fill the people's *hearts*, till God fills their hands. — *Van Doren*. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth" (Prov. 11: 24).

42. And were filled. No one went away hungry. So ever with God's gospel: there is enough for all and to spare. No one need imagine that others will have to go without because he receives all he needs.

VIII. Gathering up the Fragments. — Vs. 43, 44. 43. And they took up twelve baskets. All four accounts have the same word for basket, *cophinus*, *i. e.*, the wallet which every Jew carried when on a journey, to keep himself independent of Gentile

food, which would be unclean (comp. *Juvenal* III., 14). Each of the twelve gathered into his own wallet and filled it full. — *Cambridge Bible*. Of the size of these baskets nothing definite is known. — *Dr. Hovey*. Full of the fragments. It is usual to understand by this the fragments broken by the multitude during their meal; but it is more probable that they were pieces broken by our Lord, — pieces that remained undisturbed or unconsumed because of the abundance of the supply. — *Schaff*.



Bethsaida (West).

WHY THEY WERE REQUIRED TO GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS. (1) The design is to bring out the preciousness of the food which Jesus had given.—*Schaff*. (2) He likewise exhorts his disciples to frugality; for the increase of the bounty of God ought not to be an excitement to luxury.—*Calvin*. God loveth a bountiful, not a wasteful hand.—*Sandys*. It teaches a wise economy in the smallest affairs of life.—*Van Doren*. (3) It showed to the disciples the spiritual truth that the more they gave of the gospel blessings to others, the more they would have themselves. (4) It completes the proof of the miracle, for more remained than there was to begin with.

GAIN BY GIVING. Christ's provision is more than enough for a hungry world, and they who share it out among their fellows have their own possession of it increased. There is no surer way to receive the full sweetness and blessing of the gospel than to carry it to some hungry soul.—*Maclaren*. This is the arithmetic of the kingdom. Earthly arithmetic says, "Give, and want." Heavenly arithmetic says, "Give, and grow rich."—*Schauffler*.

APPLICATIONS. (1) Churches thrive in their spiritual life when they most distribute to others the gospel God has given to them. A church once, being in debt, voted to turn all its contributions into that channel till the debt was paid. But the contributions grew smaller and the debt did not. Afterwards, they gave to all objects of benevolence, and they prospered themselves financially. (2) A missionary church doing most and giving most for the heathen is most prosperous at home in all spiritual usefulness. (3) Individuals will find the same rule holding true. They gain spiritual life by imparting it. They gain clearer views of truth by teaching others. They grow richer in all that is best in life by giving freely of the money God gives them.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

On Bethsaida and the place of this miracle, see Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, III., p. 301; Bruce's *Training of the Twelve*, p. 117; Thomson's *Land and Book*, new edition, Vol. II., p. 393; Smith-Peloubet *Bible Dictionary*; Andrews' *Life of Christ*, pp. 211-217; Macgregor's *Rob Roy on the Jordan*, p. 327. Works on *The Miracles*. *Sermons for the New Life*, by Horace Bushnell, p. 364; Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Series IX., 54; *Sermons* by Mark Hopkins, "That Nothing Be Lost"; by H. W. Beecher, "Fragments of Instruction"; by Phillips Brooks, Vol. II., "How Many Loaves Have Ye?" Krummacher's *Parables*, p. 157, "The Wonder." Christlieb's *Foreign Missions*, pp. 205-209, on the effect in China of feeding the starving multitudes. Whittier's poem, "Gift of Tritonius," shows how, by giving, the silver of life is changed to gold.

LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.

1. All workers for Jesus need seasons of rest, retirement, meditation, and communion with him. No one can do the best work without these seasons.

2. These people gathered in crowds around Jesus from various motives, but he taught them and helped them. We should preach the gospel to every one, no matter with what motives they come to hear.

3. Jesus knows and sympathizes with our temporal needs. There is no earthly care or burden but we should bring to him.

4. Our duties and our privileges are not measured by what we can do of ourselves, but by what God is willing to do through us. We cannot turn the machinery of the factory, but we can let the water on to the wheel. We cannot push the steamship across the ocean, but we can let on the steam for the engine to do it.

5. This miracle shows Christ's lordship over nature. He did what God is doing every year when "He transmutes the handful of seed-corn into the rich harvests of grain which feed the multitudes of men."

6. "Order is heaven's first law"; "In heaven life itself is a song, a *gloria in excelsis*."

7. We can make a little go a great way with Jesus' blessing. We need not be troubled by our small talents, or meagre means, or few opportunities, if we consecrate them to him and his service.

8. The hope of the world's salvation is in the wonderful power of God in multiplying the lilies; the numbers, the wealth, the power of Christians are enough for the salvation of the world, if they will distribute what God gives them, and his blessing goes with it.

9. Gather up the fragments. Let nothing be wasted or lost in God's work. Using well or wasting the fragments of time, of opportunity, the nooks and corners of life, makes all the difference between success and failure.

10. "There is no waster in the universe like a sinner." He wastes infinite opportunities, infinite love, infinite blessings, a soul of infinite worth.

11. Jesus conferred great honor on the disciples in making them the instruments of conferring his bounty. So let teachers, pastors, parents, not do all things themselves, but use scholars and children, whenever it is possible, in the works of mercy.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

READ the parallel accounts. This is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Note how one complements the others. Point out the places on the map. Note the change in the scene of Jesus' labors, and the reasons for it.

SUBJECT: THE COMPASSION OF JESUS FOR THE NEEDY MULTITUDES.

I. THE MULTITUDES AS SHEEP WITHOUT A SHEPHERD (vs. 30-33). The circumstances, as in *Explanatory*. The place, the time, what attracted the crowds.

II. JESUS SATISFIES THEIR WANTS BY TEACHING AND HEALING (v. 34).

Illustration. I well remember at Camp Convalescent, how, while we were in the hospitals filled with the sick and dying, among the prisoners, sad and foreboding, there sometimes came the sweet music of the band through the open windows. The blessed sounds filled all the air, floated through the prison doors, mingled with the groans of the suffering, touched the heart of the prisoner. So, in this world of sorrow and sickness, comes the sweet music of God's promises, of his words of love, of his visions of the future; and no prison bars can keep them out.

III. JESUS FEEDS THEM WITH MIRACULOUS FOOD (vs. 35-42).

Illustration. There has been a strong, almost irresistible prejudice against Christianity in China, because of the wrongs she has received by war and the opium trade, from nations called Christian. "During the few years previous to 1878," says Mr. Stevenson, "twelve million persons perished in China from famine. But to relieve this terrible distress, thousands of dollars were collected from Christian nations, especially England, and distributed among the starving with such self-sacrifice that five missionaries fell victims to their over-exertions." "But," says Mr. Forest, the British consul, "this distribution of Christian charity through the missionaries will do actually more to promote the opening up of China than a dozen wars, and, in fact, the door has been flung open wider than ever for the gospel."—*Christlieb, Foreign Missions*, pp. 205-209. Whole villages in India and China have thus been turned from heathenism to the Christianity which was so abundant in good works.

Illustration. This miracle was an acted, visible parable or object lesson, showing the spiritual effects of Christ's teaching. A Japanese girl said in a missionary meeting: "One spring my mother got some flower seeds, little ugly, black things, and planted them. They grew and blossomed beautifully. One day a neighbor, seeing the flowers, said, 'Oh, how beautiful! Won't you please give me some seeds?' Now, if the neighbor had only just seen the flower seeds, she wouldn't have called for them. 'Twas only when she saw how beautiful was the blossom she wanted the seed. And so with Christianity. When we speak to our friends of the truths of the Bible, they seem to them hard and uninteresting. But when they see these same truths blossoming out in our lives into kindly words and good acts, then they say, 'How beautiful these lives!'"—*London S. S. Chronicle*.

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLES. Elijah fed by ravens (1 Kings 17: 6); miraculously increases the widow's meal and oil (1 Kings 17: 9-16); Elisha feeds one hundred men with twenty loaves (2 Kings 4: 42-44). The manna (Ex. 16: 14-35).

Illustration. Two men representing an important institution were once in great straits for their cause, when one said to the other, "I am 0, you are 0, but Christ is 1, and that makes 100. With Christ behind us, we must succeed."

IV. GATHERING UP THE FRAGMENTS (vs. 43, 44).

Illustration. There was once an apprentice to an artist in stained-glass windows, who used the odd hours of his time and the waste pieces of glass to make a window, and the result was more beautiful than any his master had made, and it was placed in a church.

Illustration. In the United States Mint at Philadelphia I was told that the putting of a grated floor upon the room where certain parts of the work were done brought a saving of \$80,000 in a year, from the little specks of gold that floated off during the working of the metal. They fell upon the floor, were swept up, washed out, and remelted.

Illustration. Science says, "Gather up the fragments." Many of the most useful things are now made out of what was once thrown away. The former refuse in making kerosene oil is now worth more than the oil. The waste of logs is made into paper, and so of many things.

Illustration. (1) The fountain that gives what it receives is fresh, and clear, and beautiful. The bog that receives and does not give is malarious, foul, reptile-haunted. (2) Cities grow rich by receiving and giving. They are centers of commerce. The poem of the "Two Sacks of Wheat." One man kept his until it rotted away. The other sowed his broadcast, and reaped a harvest.

Illustration. The widow's cruse of oil and barrel of meal (1 Kings 17: 9-16).

LESSON III. — JANUARY 20.

CHRIST THE BREAD OF LIFE. — JOHN 6: 25-35.

Golden Text. — *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.* — JOHN 6: 31.

THE SECTION includes a review of the last lesson, and therefore the whole of John 6.

TIME. — A Sabbath early in April, A. D. 29, the day after our last lesson. That it was their Sabbath is shown from the fact that the latter part of the discourse was given in the synagogue (v. 59).

PLACE. — Capernaum, on the northwest shore of the Lake of Galilee, now Tell Hum.

THE FIRST EFFECT of the miracle of the loaves was to produce such confidence in Jesus' power that the people sought to make him their king by force, imagining, perhaps, that he was too retiring. Here was just the leader they needed, who could at a word supply all the needs of an army, and had all divine power at his command. With him for a leader, taking advantage of the discontent, the whole people would rise up, overthrow Herod, go to Jerusalem, make it their capital, throw off the Roman yoke, and enter upon the glorious career God had promised. So, often in God's work, we would pluck the fruit before it is ripe, and not wait patiently the divine processes.

THE NIGHT OF PRAYER (John 6: 15; Matt. 14: 23-25). — When Jesus had fed the multitudes, as in our last lesson, he sent them away to their homes, constrained the disciples to set out for Bethsaida in their boat, and then, retiring to the mountain retreats, he spent the night in prayer. The REASONS probably were (1) he needed rest of spirit after the long days of labor in teaching and working. Communion with God is rest. (2) In all spiritual work there is need of constant communion with God. The best part of prayer is this communion. (3) Jesus was standing alone against a Niagara current of misleading influences. The action of the people to make him a king was a renewal of one of his greatest temptations, — to obtain immediate success by a worldly kingdom, instead of a spiritual kingdom and the salvation of men by the slow way of the cross. "And as he prayed, the faithful stars in the heavens shone out."

THE STORM AT SEA (vs. 18, 19). — While Jesus was praying among the hills, the disciples were rowing in a northeast direction toward Bethsaida, where, apparently, they were to meet Jesus, take him on board, and then proceed to Capernaum, their home. On the way they were overtaken by one of the sudden, violent storms from the north, so common on the Sea of Galilee. The danger was great, and the tempest drove them away from their harbor.

The REASON for this experience probably was to train them in faith, hope, and courage. For soon they were to sail on the world's stormier sea, with him far above, seeing but unseen. "He will not have them to be clinging only to the sense of his bodily presence, — as ivy, needing always an outward support, — but as hardy forest trees which can brave a blast; and this time he puts them forth into the danger alone, even as some loving mother-bird thrusts her fledglings from the nest, that they may find their own wings, and learn to use them." — *Trench.*

IT IS I; BE NOT AFRAID (vs. 19, 20). — In the fourth watch, between three and six o'clock (Matt. 14: 25), when they had gone two or three miles (v. 19), Jesus appeared to them, walking on the boisterous waters. But before this, as Mark (6: 48) tells us, Jesus was watching them. To themselves they seemed alone, but his eye was upon

25. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

26. Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.

27. Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for ¹ that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for ² him hath God the Father sealed.

And when they found him ²⁵ on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither?

Jesus answered them and ²⁶ said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye ate of the loaves, and were filled.

Work not for the meat ²⁷ which perisheth, but for the meat which abideth unto eternal life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him the Father, even God, hath sealed.

¹ Vs. 54-58. Jer. 15: 16.

² Matt. 3: 17; 17: 5. John 5: 37. Acts 2: 22.

them from his mountain top. His heart was with them. They were continually within his love and protection.

I know not where his islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;

I only know I cannot drift
Beyond his love and care. — *Whittier*.

At first the disciples were afraid, but Jesus calmed their fears, — “Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid”; and soon they were in the desired haven.

“Amid the howling, wintry sea
We are in port if we have thee.”

Their faith was strengthened by knowing that Jesus was lord of sea, and land, and all the forces of nature.

HERE IS A TYPE OF THE CHRISTIAN and OF THE CHURCH amid the storms of sorrow and temptation, doubts, and perplexities, and cares. “Ours is a ship on a voyage, not a ship in a harbor, so that the storms blow over us. It is not the absence of danger, but the presence of Christ which reassures us.” — *McDonald*. The church is safe in the world so long as the world is not in the church. The church with the divine Saviour, the Christ, in it is always safe.

PETER’S EXPERIENCE, recorded in Matthew (14: 28-31), should not be omitted. As Jesus drew near the boat, walking on the water, Peter desired to try the experiment himself, by the aid of Christ’s power. He stepped out upon the sea, and the water bore him up. But, looking at the boisterous waves, instead of at Jesus, his faith failed him, and he began to sink. Jesus took him by the hand, and brought him into the boat. Self-confidence led to failure. But faith in Jesus, who put forth his hand, brought him safety.

EXPLANATORY.

I. Seeking the Food that Perisheth. — Vs. 25-27. Some of the people who had been fed miraculously seem to have gone back to the place the next morning, hoping to find Jesus, knowing that he did not sail away with the disciples. These immediately sailed over to Capernaum, and when they had found him, they said, **Rabbi**, that is Master, Teacher, **when camest thou hither?** for it was a mystery how he got across unseen.

26. Jesus answered, not their question, but their needs. **Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles**, Gr. and R. V., *signs*. They were not attracted by the miracles as signs of God’s love, as types and proofs that Jesus was the Messiah, as invitations to trust and love him. They saw the outward form of the miracles, but not the soul; they read the words as in an unknown tongue, but did not see their meaning. **But because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.** The verb means “were satisfied as a beast is with fodder.” — *Whitelaw*. They were not hypocrites; they only took a low view, and were selfish. Their motives lay chiefly in the *results* of the miracles; the healing, the satisfying of hunger, and not in the miracles as *signs*.

27. Labor not, work not, the same word as work in verses 28-30 below. **For the meat which perisheth.** The food for the body. This is not to be the chief end even of work for daily food; it is not to be the great object for which we expend our energies. Labor for earthly food should be merely a means to something higher, which is the true end

28. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God?

of all labor. Thus one who works to obtain means to give to missions, or for an education, is not really working for money, but for missions, or education. So one who works that he may obtain food in order to live a Christian life and serve God in the world is not laboring for the meat that perisheth.

But the seeking *first* the satisfaction of worldly wants is degrading and unworthy.

II. Seeking the Bread of Life.

— Vs. 27-33. 27. **But.** Work; use all the energies of your nature. We are continually putting our life into something which embodies the results of our living. Let it be **for that meat (food) which endureth unto everlasting life.** Put your life into that which is permanent, not transient; not into the things seen and temporal, but into those which are not seen and are eternal.

NOTE that the ideal here is not Nirvana, a condition of inactivity and rest, but larger, higher life.

"'Tis life of which our nerves are scant,
More life and fuller, that we want."

THE BREAD OF LIFE. The soul needs food as really as the body. Every faculty of the soul needs its own food, that will strengthen and sustain its life, develop its powers, make it grow into the fulness and perfection of its nature. Whatever enlarges the soul, builds up the character, increases faith, hope, love, knowledge, and all the virtues, makes the conscience more tender and true, cultures the will, perfects the judgment, and enables the soul to work out a pure and holy life, and fits it for heaven, — whatever does these things is the bread of life. **Which the Son of man.** The term is especially appropriate here, as it is only by virtue of his incarnation and Messianic office that Christ gives this enduring food. — *Geo. W. Clark.* **Shall give unto you.** It is, to be sure, a meat which is *given* thee; but yet thou must strive after it, if thou wouldest possess it. — *R. Besser.* Most of the best gifts of God we must thus labor for, seek earnestly and supremely. He gives us our daily bread; but we must labor for it. He gives us education, wisdom, character; but we must seek and work. Yet they are none the less his gifts. So he feeds the birds, but they must find and eat their food; so he cares for the flowers, but they must take in their nourishment according to their own natures. God's good things can never be bought. Sin has wages, its rewards can be bought, but eternal life is God's gift.

'Tis heaven alone that is given away,
'Tis only God may be had for the asking. — *Lowell.*

For. Showing the reason why Jesus could bestow this life. **Him hath God the Father sealed.** To seal anything is to attest by some sign or mark that it is genuine, that it comes from the person who sealed it with his endorsement. The seal to the ancients was like our signature. Most people could not read or write. Hence engraved seals with various devices were used for signatures. God authenticated Jesus by signs all could understand, giving him the divine "sanction and endorsement as a Teacher and Saviour. He had been thus 'sealed' (1) by direct testimony in the scriptures; (2) by the same in the voice from heaven at his baptism; (3) by indirect testimony in his miracles and Messianic work." — *Cambridge Bible.*

28. **What shall, or must, we do.** The question is suggested by the command to labor in verse 27. **That we might work the works of God?** The works required by God,



Ruins of a Jewish Synagogue, near Capernaum.

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, ¹ This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

30. They said therefore unto him, ² What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work?

31. Our fathers did eat ³ manna in the desert; as it is written, ⁴ He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Jesus answered and said ²⁹ unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom (a) he hath sent.

They said therefore unto ³⁰ him, What then dost thou for a sign, that we may see, and believe thee? what workest thou?

Our fathers ate the manna ³¹ in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.

¹ 1 John 3: 23.

² Matt. 12: 38; 16: 1.

³ 1 Cor. 1: 22.

⁴ Ex. 16: 15.

(a) Or, he sent.

Num. 11: 7. Neh. 9: 15.

⁴ Ps. 78: 24, 25.

and, therefore, pleasing to him. — *Hovey*. The works God would have us do so that we may obtain this bread of life.

29. **This is the work of God, that ye believe on (rest your faith upon) him whom he hath sent.** He turns their attention from the outward to the inward, to the source and spring of all good works. Because (1) faith is the principle which produces good works, is the tree on which they naturally grow, the fountain from which they naturally flow. And (2) because no works are really good which do not spring from faith. What are acts of love if no love is in them? What are outward acts of morality if there is no virtuous heart behind them and pervading them? He that has faith, and he only, does the works of God. **Whom he hath sent.** As his ambassador, as his messenger, bringing his word of truth, as his representative. Hence, he who receives Christ receives God.

WHAT IS THIS FAITH? "That confiding and affectionate belief in the person and work of Christ which affects the character and life and makes the man a true Christian." — *Webster*. It is the accepting of Jesus Christ as our Teacher and Lord; so that his teachings and truths are the real things of life to us, "the substance of things hoped for." It is far more than a mere assent to historical facts about Jesus.

HOW DOES THIS FAITH PRODUCE THE WORKS OF GOD? (1) As Christ is the truth, he that accepts him as teacher will know the will of God. (2) As Christ commands only what is right, and all that is right, he who accepts him as Lord and Master will do what is right, will conform his life to the will of God. (3) He that follows Christ follows a perfect example. (4) Christ imparts the spiritual life and love which are the source of all the truest good works. No work is really good unless it is filled with faith and love.

30. **What sign, the usual word for "miracle" in John. Shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe?** True faith must always have a foundation. We cannot be expected to believe without proof. What signs; what proofs do you bring that bear the "image and superscription of God," and thus authenticate your mission? What kingly acts that will prove you to be worthy to be the king of the Jews? So far as this desire for proof grew out of a real desire to know whether he were the Messiah, it was right. Christ does not wish us to have a mere blind belief, but always gives us proofs and reasons for the faith he requires of us.

31. **Our fathers did eat manna in the desert.** Given them from God through Moses. (See Ex. 16.) **As it is written.** In Psalms 78: 24 we read (following the Greek version): "And he rained for them manna to eat, and gave them bread of heaven"; and in Exodus 16: 4, "Behold I rain for you bread out of heaven."

"Moses proved that he was sent from God by giving the people bread from heaven to eat; now what do you do that is greater than this to prove that you are the greater prophet, even the Messiah?" They seem to have been thinking over the miracle of the loaves, since the day before, when they tried to make Jesus a king on that account, and to have questioned whether, after all, he was as great as they at first thought. For (1) Moses, in their thought, gave the manna forty years; Jesus had given bread only for one afternoon meal. (2) Moses gave it from heaven; Jesus wrought his miracle on earth in the simplest possible



Rings and Seals.

32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my ¹ Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

33. For the bread of God is ² he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

34. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

35. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall ³ never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall ⁴ never thirst.

Jesus therefore said unto ³² them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread out of heaven.

For the bread of God is ³³ that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

They said therefore unto ³⁴ him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

Jesus said unto them, I ³⁵ am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall not hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

¹ Gal. 4: 4.² Vs. 48, 58.³ Rev. 7: 16.⁴ John 4: 14; 7: 37.

way. (3) Moses fed two millions of people, Jesus only a few thousands. (4) "The manna," says Abbott, "was a sweet and delicate food; but the bread which Christ had distributed was barley bread, the commonest fare of the poorest people." (5) It is quite possible that some who ate the bread did not realize the greatness of the miracle, so naturally and quietly was it performed.

32. **Then Jesus said.** Showing in his answer that his gift was far superior; for the miracle of the loaves on which their thought rested was but a mere hint and type of the bread Jesus gave. The superiority was in four respects, and by pointing these out, Jesus set forth the value of the true bread from heaven to which he would lead them.

FIRST. Moses gave you not. Better as in R. v., *it was not Moses that gave.* The manna was sent in answer to the people's complaints of hunger, and the message that it was coming was sent by Moses and Aaron (Ex. 16: 4-6), but the manna did not come through any action of theirs. **That bread.** Better, as in R. v., *the bread from heaven.* That is, the manna (Ex. 16: 4). **But my Father giveth you.** The same God who gave the manna, but one in much closer relation to me than to Moses. "Note the change of tense from 'gave' to 'giveth.' God is continually giving the true bread; it is not a thing granted at one time and then no more, like the manna." — *Cambridge Bible.*

SECOND. The true bread. "True" in the sense of real and perfect. — *Cambridge Bible.* That which fulfils absolutely, ideally, the highest conception of sustaining food. — *Westcott.* The bread which men most need, that is most important to their well-being, that sustains the soul to everlasting life. The manna was but a type of this true bread; it was for the body, while the true bread is for the soul; it could be kept only one or two days without corruption, while the true bread is everlasting; those who ate the manna died, while those who eat of the bread of life live forever.

THIRD. From heaven. The manna came from heaven, as God himself said (Ex. 16: 4). But rather from the visible heaven, the atmosphere; but the true bread came from the real heaven where God the Father dwells.

33. **For the bread of God is he** (better in R. v., *that*) **which cometh down from heaven.** Christ does not identify himself with "the bread" till the next answer. — *Westcott.* He simply gives the criterion by which the true bread can be known.

FOURTH. And giveth life unto the world. The manna was for one nation, while the true bread is for all the world; the manna was for a brief age; the true bread is for the world in all ages.

III. Jesus the Bread of Life. — Vs. 34, 35. 34. **Then said they unto him, Lord.** "Lord" is too strong, *Sir* would be better. — *Cambridge Bible.* **Evermore give us this bread.** The Jews understand this bread, as the Samaritan woman understood the water, to be some miraculous kind of sustenance which would bestow life everlasting. — *Alford.* It is probable that in different hearers there were differing degrees of comprehending Christ's words, — some looking for miraculous food for the body; some for the abundant blessings of a temporal Messiah; some having a vague sense of spiritual need; while in others there was a deep spiritual hunger that felt the value of spiritual food, without understanding how Christ could give it.

35. **And Jesus said unto them, I** (the pronoun is emphatic) **am the bread of life.** Here before you, you have one who fulfils in himself all that is characteristic of the true bread from heaven, as described above.

JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE. (1) He brings spiritual life to men. He awakens the spiritual faculties and senses that were dead to the higher, *immortal interests*. A new sphere or region is opened to men, as if one who had been born blind had the sense of sight given to him. (2) This spiritual life is eternal life. He that belongs to Jesus lives forever. (3) He nourishes every faculty of the soul, enlarging and strengthening them all, and thus the soul grows in perception, in power, in activity. (4) He especially is food to the character, making it to grow more and more like his own. (5) The soul has many hungers, appetites, and desires for higher things, all of which Jesus satisfies. **He that cometh to me, . . . he that believeth on me.** These are two aspects of faith, *the active, and the restful*, two aspects which are continually occurring in the experiences of life. This faith is the same as eating his flesh in verse 54. It is opening the heart to receive him; it is trusting him with all the heart; it is going to him in faith and prayer for comfort, and help, and teaching, and all that the soul needs. It is not a momentary act at the beginning of the Christian life, but in each of its aspects, "coming" and "believing," expresses the abiding relation of the disciple to his Lord. The original words, *He that is coming*, are chosen with exquisite delicacy. The figure is not that of one who has achieved a toilsome and lengthened journey (as if the words ran, "he that at length has reached me"), but that of one whose resolve is taken, and who sets out in the right way. — *Revised Commentary.* **Shall never hunger**, "Shall never desire spiritual grace and not have it given to him." — *Sadler.* Shall never have the hunger of pain, the hunger that is not satisfied; while he shall have the hunger that Jesus pronounced blessed, the hunger after righteousness, which is an appetite for more, and which shall be continually satisfied. The best, and highest, and happiest earthly condition is that which is full of desires, and aspirations, and longings, called hunger in the Beatitudes, but every one of which has its satisfactions. But he that goes to Jesus shall have no painful, unsatisfied longings. The soul is full of longings and hungerings, but Jesus satisfies them all. **Shall never thirst.** This is a similar figure, but still stronger. Compare Isaiah 55: 1-3. Alford notes that the manna was no sooner given (Ex. 16) than the people began to thirst (Ex. 17).

How is JESUS THE BREAD OF LIFE? Not by eating his actual flesh, even if, as some suppose, the bread of the communion were changed into that. We in no way become what we eat. "What lion eats becomes lion." "Sheep eat grass, but it is wool that grows on their backs." We should be no better if we could actually eat the body of Christ. But whatever feeds our souls does make us better, and Jesus does this: (1) By his life, death, and atonement on the cross, Jesus has made it possible for us to enter upon spiritual and eternal life. (2) He has brought to us the message of eternal life from God, of which we could not be certain without this proof. (3) The Holy Spirit whom he sends, imparts and sustains life. (4) He brings the means and motives of eternal life. (5) He strengthens and inspires all the activities by his personal power over our souls. We have hints of this in the power certain people have over us to inspire, awaken, and uplift us. Their presence is an atmosphere of health. We want to live better when we are near them. So with Jesus when we draw near him in love. I feel

"His being working in my own,
The footsteps of his life in mine."

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PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Jesus taught those who came from the lowest motives. We are not responsible for the motives with which people come to our teaching, but we are responsible for what we do to help them.

2. V. 27. The true aim and purpose of life is that which is spiritual and eternal, belonging to the character and the soul rather than the body.

3. The soul needs food as really as the body.

4. The food of the soul is that which gives it fresh life, which enlarges its being, strengthens its faculties, develops its moral character, satisfies its longings and aspirations.

5. The source of this food for the soul is Jesus Christ.
6. V. 29. The first duty God requires is to receive from Jesus the new heart, which is the source of all true moral action.
7. Vs. 30-33. God does not ask credulity of us, but faith; and he gives us reasons and proofs on which to found our faith.
8. The greatest proof of Christianity is Christ himself, his person, his works, his character, his teachings, the effects of his life upon the world.
9. V. 35. The tests of the *bread of life* are (1) it is from God; (2) it is life-giving; (3) it is for the whole world; (4) it satisfies the wants of the soul.
10. Vs. 35-40. *The blessedness* of the bread of life, — (1) it satisfies; (2) it continues; (3) it gives safety; (4) it brings eternal life here; (5) it gives eternal life beyond the grave.
11. *The way* to attain this blessedness, — coming to Jesus, believing on Jesus, eating the bread of life, receiving it into the heart and life.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

REVIEW the last lesson, as the foundation for the instruction in this.

THE CONNECTION brings to view some very instructive incidents, part of which must be read in the other Gospels.

SUBJECT: THE BREAD OF LIFE.

I. SEEKING THE FOOD THAT PERISHETH (vs. 25-27).

EXAMPLES. Solomon tried all that the world can give, and under the most favorable circumstances, yet found all to be vanity and vexation of spirit. Byron, with rank and wealth, and all manner of pleasure, failed of content and happiness. Alexander conquered the world, but it did not satisfy his soul; and, if he could have conquered all the worlds that stud the heavens, he would still have wept for more. For God has not created a single human soul so small and poor that all the material universe can fill it. All literature is full of expressions of the failure of worldly things to satisfy the soul.

ILLUSTRATION. Satisfying the soul with this world is like quenching thirst with the salt water of the sea, that makes still more thirsty. It is like a mirage, appearing to be water, while it is a waste of sand.

II. SEEKING THE BREAD OF LIFE (vs. 27-32). "On earth there is nothing great but man; in man there is nothing great but mind."— *On Title Page of Sir Wm. Hamilton's Metaphysics*.

ILLUSTRATE the need of laboring for this food, and hungering for it, by illustrations taken from our bodily wants. If the body has no appetite, no hunger, it is sick. It cannot grow strong and well without an appetite, and food to satisfy it.

SEEKING. "All human religions are man's effort to give an answer to that question" (v. 28).

"And what am I?
An infant crying in the night,
An infant crying for the light,
And with no language but a cry."

III. FINDING THE BREAD OF LIFE (vs. 33-35).

SHOW how Jesus is that bread; how he gives life to the soul, saves from death to eternal life, nourishes and strengthens every part of the soul, and develops the character, satisfies every longing.

ILLUSTRATION. The ancient Greeks represented their gods as living on ambrosia and nectar, food and drink of divine delicacy and flavor, but not to be taken by mortals. But our Lord sends from heaven the food of the immortals, that all men may partake thereof and live forever.

A perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns. — *Milton*.

THE PERSONAL POWER of Christ to those who love him and abide with him. The French King said, "*I am the state*." Still more may we say, "*The teacher is the school*." A student of President Hopkins said that if he were seated on a log with Dr. Hopkins for a teacher, it would be a university.

"Some good man must be singled out and kept ever before our eyes, that we may live as if he were looking on, and do everything as if he could see it." — *Cicero*.

"No receipt openeth the heart but a true friend."

When Carlyle met Irving it was "iron-sharpened iron, diamond-cut diamond. Each sharpened the face of the other and lit it up with sparks and sparkles as of a light that never was on sea or shore." — *Jacox*.

Not the sun
Looks out upon us more revivingly
In the first days of the first month of spring
Than a friend's countenance in such an hour.
— *Schiller*.

Good! and your faces brighten, and your eyes
Glitter, as stars do in a good, sharp wind.
Sharp! Why, what else should be the atmosphere
Of vigorous spirits?
— *Lytton*.

LESSON IV. — JANUARY 27.

THE GREAT CONFESSION. — MATT. 16: 13-23.

Golden Text. — *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* — MATT. 16: 16.

THE SECTION extends from Matthew 15: 1 to 16: 28; also Mark 8: 22-26, and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS. — Mark 8: 27 to 33; Luke 9: 18-22.

TIME. — Summer of A. D. 29. A few weeks after the last lesson, and about nine months before the crucifixion.

PLACE. — On the way to the Mount of Transfiguration, in the region around Cesarea Philippi. This city was situated twenty-five or thirty miles northeast of the Sea of Galilee, near the head waters of the Jordan; about four miles east of Dan, the northernmost town of Palestine proper. It was at the foot of the lofty Hermon (9,000 feet high), in the most picturesque part of Palestine. It was named after Cesar and Herod Philip.

JESUS. — About thirty-two and one half years old; in the third year of his ministry.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Bär-jō'na; Cēsāre'ā-Philip'pi; Jērēm'ās; Mäg'dälā; Sy'-rō-phēn'cian.

THE INTERVENING STORY. — After the discourse arising from the miracle of the loaves, many of the followers of Jesus forsook him (John 6: 66-71). Then emissaries from Jerusalem reproached him for disregarding the traditions of the elders (Matt. 15: 1-20). The opposition in Galilee had thus grown so strong that Jesus went away into the vicinity of Tyre and Sidon and other regions around Galilee (Matt. 15: 21 to 16: 12), healing and teaching. Leaving the Sea of Galilee, they journeyed northward into the region of Cesarea Philippi, and on the way the words of to-day's lesson were spoken.

THE NEW EPOCH. — This journey marks a turning point or new era in the education of the disciples. Jesus reveals to them more clearly his nature as the Messiah, and for the first time shows them the necessity of his sufferings and death — first by his teachings, and then by the transfiguration scene. He also begins the organized church, — lays the first stones of the structure upon the great bed-rock foundation.

13. When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, ¹ Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?

Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say (a) that the Son of man is?

¹ Mark 8: 27. Luke 9: 18.

(a) Many ancient authorities read that I the Son of man am? See Mark 8: 27; Luke 9: 18.

EXPLANATORY.

I. That Jesus is the Messiah Becomes the Settled Conviction of the Apostles. — Vs. 13-17. 13. When Jesus came, in his journey from Bethsaida northward, along the road east of the Jordan (Mark 8: 22). Into the coasts, regions or borders, of Cesarea Philippi. See *Place*.

14. And they said, ¹ Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

15. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

16. And Simon Peter answered and said, ² Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And they said, Some say ¹⁴ John the Baptist; some Elijah: and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But ¹⁵ who say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter an- ¹⁶ swered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

¹ Matt. 14: 2. Luke 9: 7, 8, 9.

² Matt. 14: 33. Mark 8: 29. Luke 9: 20. John 6: 69.
Acts 8: 37. Heb. 1: 2, 5.

NOTE. We learn from Luke 9: 18 that this new era or epoch began in prayer alone with his disciples. He asked his disciples. His object seems to have been to draw out the faith of his disciples, and to reveal to them more fully his nature and his redeeming work. He would put and have them put into definite form what they had been gradually learning from his words and works,—that he was indeed the Messiah, the Son of God. Whom, in modern English *who*, as in R. V., do men say that I, the Son of man, am? The Son of man was a title he frequently applied to himself (see Dan. 7: 13, 14), but it is never applied to him by the apostles. It expressed his human, visible side. He would know what they had found the popular impression to be concerning him, how far they understood his nature and his work.

14. Some say . . . John the Baptist, returned to life. Among these was Herod (Matt. 14: 1, 2). Some, Elias, *i. e.*, Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah, who had wrought some great miracles, and had turned the tide of the nation from heathen worship to the true God. And others, Jeremias, the Greek form of Jeremiah. "Jeremiah is placed first, because in Jewish canon he was placed first among the Old Testament prophets," and was regarded as among the greatest. Perhaps, also, because of the character of his preaching, mingling denunciation with hope. Or one of the prophets, *i. e.*, "that one of the old prophets is risen again" (Luke 9: 19).

NOTE that this variety of opinion shows that the people were thinking and discussing, but had come to no certain beliefs. None of them speak of Jesus as the Messiah, for his appearance was in too great a contrast with their expectations. Dr. Morison well says: "The great body of the people could not entertain the idea that he was the glorious King of kings. What was there of the kingly in his circumstances? Where were the crown, the sceptre, the throne, the princely followers, the treasures, the armies?" Moreover, he had refused to let them make him their king (John 6: 14, 15), and this took away their hope that he was "the prophet that should come into the world."

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST is the most important question for us. It is the crucial question of our religious life, which will measure its height, its power, its comfort, its quality. Christ as a prophet, as a great teacher, as a noble example, is of great value to us in many ways. But Christ as the atoning Redeemer, as the revealer of God's forgiving love, as the infinite Son of God with all knowledge of the present and the future, with all power to save and help, everywhere present,—such a Christ is vastly more helpful and comforting. As Dr. Holland says: "The mightier the Christ of a church is, the mightier the church as an influence for good in the world." Men "are weak and need help; they are sinful, and need pardon; they are lost and need to be saved. To tell such people that 'a Hebrew philosopher,' who was only a good man, can save them, is to feed starving men with chaff. . . Only his God can be his Saviour, and his Saviour must be his God."

15. But whom (R. V., *who*) say ye that I am? Observe "ye," plural, and by position in the Greek exceedingly emphatic—in contrast with the discordant popular opinions. The question is addressed to all, and Peter answers as their spokesman, just as he does in many other cases.—*Broadus*.

16. And Simon Peter answered. His original name was Simon or Simeon. Peter was an additional name conferred by Jesus to express his nature and work in the church (John 1: 41, 42). Simon Peter was one of the quickest to perceive truth, and the readiest to utter it. Jesus' question was like a match to powder, and the convictions within him, condensed in a compact form, burst out from the fulness of his heart. Thou art the Christ, the Anointed One, the Messiah. "Christ" is the Greek and "Messiah" is the Hebrew for "anointed." Anointing was the method by which kings, and sometimes prophets, were set apart for their work. The Son of the living God. The Son of God in the highest sense, which could be asserted of no other being. God is here styled *living*

17. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: ¹ for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my ² Father which is in heaven.

18. And I say also unto thee, ³ That thou art Peter, and ⁴ upon this rock I will build my church; and ⁵ the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

And I also say unto thee, ¹⁷ that thou art (*b*) Peter, and upon this (*c*) rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

¹ Eph. 2: 8.³ John 1: 42.⁵ Job 38: 17.

Psa. 9: 13.

(*b*) Gr., *Petros*.² 1 Cor. 2: 10. Gal. 1: 16.⁴ Eph. 2: 20. Rev. 21: 14.

Isa. 38: 10.

(*c*) Gr., *petra*.

God, because he is the author of all life and existence; hence, self-existent, eternal. *The Son of the living God* was one who partook of that living, self-existent, and eternal nature. — *G. W. Clark*. If Jesus were the Messiah, then he must be whatever it had been foretold that the Messiah should be, the promised seed of Abraham, the anointed King, “the wonderful Counsellor,” “the angel of the covenant.”

17. **Blessed art thou.** Because thou hast opened thy heart to the truth; because thou hast broken from the bondage of Jewish prejudice and worldly vision; because thou hast such firm confidence in such a Saviour. Faith, knowledge of Christ as the Son of God, almighty to save and infinite in love; a heart in which truth finds a natural soil; a character in harmony with Jesus; broader outlooks into truth — are all exquisite blessings. **Simon Bar-jona**; *i. e.*, son of Jonah. *Bar* is Aramaic (the Syriac Hebrew then in use) for *son*. Jonah should begin with a capital *J*, as in the R. v. **For flesh and blood**: no man, no weak mortal, hath revealed this unto you. It has not its origin in the mere human knowledge, in the workings of the human mind. **But my Father which is in heaven.** God flashed forth the truth, and Peter did not close his eyes that he might not see.

THIS TRUTH could only come by revelation from the Father, and it was well worthy of his revealing. It meant salvation, the coming of the kingdom of heaven, the redemption of the world.

VALUE OF CONFESSION. It must have required great courage for Peter to come out thus distinctly at variance with the whole trend of opinion of his countrymen and his own

pre-conceived opinion. It was not easy to see in a human being, like himself in appearance, a divine being. It shows the truth and power of Jesus' character, that his most intimate friends had the highest opinion of him. Confession of the truth strengthens one's faith in the truth. Peter had thought this before. He had his ups and downs of faith. But now he settled down upon the firm rock.

II. **Foundation Stones of the Church.** — V. 18. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter. *Petros* in Greek, *Cephas* in Aramaic; a name given him long before in prophecy (John 1: 42). And upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church. *Petros* usually means a stone, a piece of rock; *petra*, the rock in mass, the foundation or bed rock. The rock here is plainly Peter himself, but as the representative of the other apostles, as shown by the history of the church, by Jesus' including the apostles with Peter in similar promises (Matt. 18: 18; John 20: 23); and by the uniting all together as foundations in Ephesians 2: 20 and Revelation 21: 14. “The Bed Rock, ‘the Rock of Ages,’ is here, as elsewhere, God



The Shrines and Cave of Pan at Cesarea Philippi.

19. ¹ And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

I will give unto thee the ¹⁹ keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

¹ Matt. 18: 18. John 20: 23.

as revealed in his Son, and Peter is the first stone 'well and truly laid' upon it." — *Gibson*. This verse has been the source of "an immensity of discussion." We will give first what seems to us the TRUE VIEW: The church is represented as a great building, a temple of the living God. Jesus Christ is the builder, the architect. Peter, as one of the apostles, and a representative of all, filled with living experience and faith in Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the living God, is a rock, one of the great foundation stones on which Christ is rearing the building, his enduring and glorious church. (Com. Eph. 2: 20; Rev. 21: 14.)

APPLICATIONS. — 1. Every one who possesses a like faith is, according to the measure of his faith, a Peter, that is, a rock; and Christ builds his church on this rock, that is, on this living experience of faith in the Christ, inspired in the hearts of men by the Spirit of God. — *Abbott*. 2. The condition of true power in the church is always vital faith in Jesus Christ in the hearts of its members. — *Abbott*.

OTHER VIEWS. — There are two other principal views of this verse, held very strongly by their advocates, among whom are some of the leading scholars. 1. That the rock is the confession of Peter; i. e., the Messiahship and divine sonship of Jesus. Here the rock is a doctrine, and indeed the central doctrine of the church. 2. The other view is that the rock is Christ himself, who is, indeed, the foundation of the church (1 Cor. 3: 11). As if he had said, Thou art Peter, "a piece of rock"; and I will build my temple on the Rock of Ages, of which you are a portion, since you are filled with me.

THE CHURCH. I will build my church. The word for church properly denoted a congregation or assemblage of people called out. In its technical Greek usage it denoted the assembly of the free citizens duly called out to transact the business of the community. — *Morison*. The church is the organized form of the Kingdom of God, "the congregation of the faithful throughout the world, united under Christ as their head." — *Cambridge Bible*. "The ideal congregation or assembly of all real Christians," it is the great spiritual temple planned and built by God, not by man. Not human organizations, but the one great building in which God dwells by his spirit. And the gates of hell: or Hades, the kingdom of death, of destruction, shall not prevail against it to cause it to enter into destruction, represented as a walled city or castle. "Gates" are the entrance into death. Thus, in Eschylus' "Agamemnon," Clytemnestra addresses the gates of Hades, and prays that she may have a speedy and easy death. "All earthly things go down through those dread gates, but Christ's church, for which he gave himself, will never cease to exist; there will always be Christians in the world." — *Broadus*. Or the "gates" may stand for death itself, as "The Sublime Porte" (gate) for the Turkish power. From the gates issue forth the armies of attack. Or the "gates" as the place where the courts sat and deliberative assemblies were held, may designate the counsels, the plans of Hades. The meaning is the same in all cases. The realm of death shall have no power over it; it shall be indestructible. — *Prof. Kendrick*. Nothing in our Lord's teaching is, as measured by man's judgment, more wonderful than the utterance of such a prophecy at such a time. It was a time of seeming failure. He was about to announce his coming death as a malefactor; and yet it was at this moment that he proclaimed the perpetuity and triumph of the society which as yet, it may be said, existed only in the germ. — *Ellicott*. Church forms and organizations may change and be superseded by better ones, but the real church abides forever.

The Church Indestructible.

"I may not stay
To see the day
When the great Saviour shall bear sway
And earth shall glitter in the ray
That cometh from above.

But, come it fast
Or come it slow,
'Twill come at last
I surely know,
And heaven and earth shall feel the glow,
And men shall call it Love."

III. The Keys of the Kingdom. — Vs. 19, 20. 19. And I will give unto thee: representing also the other apostles, for the history shows that nothing was conferred upon

Peter that the others also did not receive. In Matthew 18: 18, 19, the others are specially included in the promise in the last part of this verse. (See also John 20: 19-23.)

FIRST. THE KEYS. The keys of the kingdom of heaven. The ancient oriental key usually bore not much resemblance to the artistic little metallic instrument which we mean by the word, and which Italian painters pictured in Peter's hands. It was a wooden apparatus, which often would heavily lade a man's arm. There was a crook at one end so that it could be worn about the neck as a badge of office. — *Abbott*.

SECOND. THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. This does not refer to heaven, the abode of the blessed, as is represented in the legend of Peter sitting at the gate of heaven. It means very nearly the same thing as "the church" in the previous verse. Here it is represented under the figure of a city with gates, or of a large house with gates for entrance, and doors of treasure-rooms.

THIRD. THE SYMBOL OF THE KEYS. (a) In great houses and palaces there was of necessity a steward or general manager of the establishment, to whom were committed the keys of the gates and of the treasure-house and storerooms, and who thus had a general authority and control over the whole. (b) "The scribes of Israel were thought of as stewards of the treasures of divine wisdom (13: 52). When they were admitted to their office they received, as its symbol, the 'key of knowledge' (Luke 11: 52), which was to admit them to the treasure-chambers of the house of the interpreter." — *Ellicott*. When the Jews made a man a *doctor of the law*, they put into his hand the key of the closet in the temple where the sacred books were kept, and also tablets to write upon; signifying by this that they gave him authority to teach and to explain the scriptures to the people. — *Martin*.

FOURTH. THE INTERPRETATION. From the above facts we learn that in giving the power of the keys, Jesus made Peter and the other apostles his prime ministers, his authoritative representatives on earth in the developing and organizing of his kingdom after his death. Somebody must have this authority, and it was best committed to those who had been trained under the personal supervision of Jesus, and afterwards endowed by the abundant gift of the enlightening and guiding Holy Spirit. (1) They would be taught the true doctrines of the gospel, through which those who believed would come into the kingdom. (2) They would be the instrumentality by which many would enter the kingdom. Thus, Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost turned the key which admitted three thousand into the kingdom in one day. (3) It gave them authority, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to decide the many administrative questions which would come up, as the admission of the Gentiles into the church (see Peter's vision, Acts 10); whether the Gentiles must conform to Jewish rites, decided in the Council at Jerusalem, under the leadership of Peter (Acts 15); the appointment of deacons; the case of Simon Magus, and of Ananias and Sapphira. (4) It gave them the key to the interpretation of the Old Testament scriptures. (5) It gave them the key to the treasure-house of gospel knowledge. It was through their witness and preaching that we have the Gospels and the rest of the New Testament, which are the authoritative rule of the church in all ages. The power of the keys is the assurance of the inspiration of the New Testament.

FIFTH. PRESENT POWER OF THE KEY IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD. In some degree all Christians have the power of the keys. On their faithfulness, and true living, and earnestness often depends whether those living in dark places shall see the light, whether the heathen shall receive the gospel. So, too, the Christian has the keys to the treasure-house of divine truth. The Holy Spirit will guide him in his search, enlighten his eyes, and he shall continually see new treasures in the word, and works, and providence of God.

And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, etc. This is an explanation and confirmation of the gift of the keys, though some refer the keys to the admission of *persons*, and the binding and loosing to the permitting or forbidding of *things*. The phrases *whatsoever thou shalt bind* and *whatsoever thou shalt loose* were common Hebrew expressions, having a definite and well-known meaning. *To bind* meant to *forbid*, or to *declare forbidden*. *To loose* meant to *allow*, or to *declare allowable*. — *Morison*. **Bound in heaven, i. e.,** receive the sanction, and authority, and approbation of God. They were to be guided infallibly in the organization of the church, first, by the teaching of Christ, and, second, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit. — *Barnes*. For examples of the exercise of this power, see Acts 1: 15-22; 5: 3-10; 6: 2-4; 11: 1-18; 15: 4-29. The power in this sense ceased with inspiration. — *G. W. Clark*. Most of the difficulties connected with the interpretation of this passage are obviated by considering that the full gospel could not be preached until after the passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord. The apostles,

20. ¹ Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

21. From that time forth began Jesus ² to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

22. Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

Then charged he the disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ.

From that time began (d) ²¹ Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.

And Peter took him, and ²² began to rebuke him, saying, (e) Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall never be unto thee.

¹ Mark 8: 30. Luke 9: 21. ² Mark 8: 31; 9: 31; 10: 33. (d) Some ancient authorities read *Jesus Christ*.
Luke 18: 31; 24: 6, 7. (e) Or, *God have mercy on thee*.

who had to lay the foundation and be the foundation, must therefore have knowledge and authority which no one after them needs or can rightly claim. — *Schaff*.

20. **Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man, etc.** Why? (1) Because the apostles were not as yet fully schooled in the doctrine of the true nature of Christ's kingdom and office, and would not be so till the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon them. — *Wordsworth*. If they preached it now, they would be certain to preach wrongly. (2) Because the people would be turned away from their spiritual needs, and the new life which was essential to the coming of the kingdom, to the desire to realize the outward glories of their false conception of the Messiah as king. This danger was entirely removed after the crucifixion. (3) The announcement that Jesus was the Messiah would be likely to excite tumult and rebellion against the Roman government, the people trying to make Jesus the leader of the revolt. This would interfere with his plan of a spiritual kingdom.

IV. The Way to the Kingdom is Through the Cross. — Vs. 21-23.

They had seen the foundation of the kingdom, and received the keys of the kingdom; now they must see the necessary condition of its institution, so different from their previous expectations. 21. **From that time forth**, because now, after their full recognition of him as the Messiah, they were prepared to know more about the way the true Messiah must come into his kingdom, and they needed this knowledge to correct and complete their views of the Messiah, and to prepare them for the events now hastening on. **Began Jesus**. This was his first announcement of this great fact. **How that he must go**: not because he had not power to do otherwise, but because it was necessary to the accomplishment of his work of redemption. **Unto Jerusalem**. The capital of the Jewish nation, the symbol of the church, the place of the temple, and its sacrifices which he had come to fulfil. **Suffer many things**: as described in the last chapters of the gospel. **And be killed**: by crucifixion, thus making the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. This is stated to guard the disciples from being disappointed when this necessary event took place, and thus losing faith in him as the Messiah. They must see it as an essential part of the plan of salvation. **And be raised again the third day**. The resurrection of Jesus was essential to the proof that he was the true Messiah, essential to his work of redemption, and reigning as king at the right hand of God (1 Cor. 15: 14-18). This is stated in each of the three accounts, and is emphasized for the sake of the faith and hope of the disciples. It was an enigma to them as yet, but its solution would be a corner-stone of their future faith.

22. **Then Peter took him**: one side, apart, to speak to him privately. **Began to**



Bowers on Housetops at Cesarea Philippi.

23. But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me ¹ Satan : ² thou art an offence unto me : for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

But he turned, and said ²³ unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan : thou art a stumbling-block unto me : for thou mindest not the things of God, but the things of men.

¹ See 2 Sam. 19: 22.

² Rom. 8: 7.

rebuke him. He only began—for he was soon interrupted—to find fault with what Jesus had been saying, and to argue against its truth. It was love to Jesus, devotion to his cause, mingled with his native self-confidence, perhaps increased by the promises just made to him by name, which led Peter to speak thus. **Saying, Be it far from thee, Lord.** The plan of redemption outlined by Jesus was so contrary to all Peter's expectations and hopes, so completely opposite to his picture of the Messiah king and his reign, that it seemed inconceivable to Peter. It was absurd, ruinous, a death blow to their own hopes, and a triumph to their enemies.

23. But he turned: turned round to the disciples (Mark 8: 33). **And said unto Peter:** publicly before them all. **Get thee behind me, Satan.** Satan means "adversary," the great "enemy" of all good, used in the Saviour's time as a proper name. In this suggestion, that he might gain the crown without the cross, and attain a kingdom of this world, the Christ saw the recurrence of the temptation which had offered him the glory of those kingdoms, on condition of his drawing back from the path which the Father had appointed for him (Matt. 4: 1-11). — *Ellicott*. He did not call his apostle a *satan*, a *devil*, but he looked for the moment through Peter, and saw behind him his old enemy, cunningly making use of the prejudices and impulsive honesty of the undeveloped apostle. — *Morison*. **Thou art an offence:** a stumbling-block instead of a foundation stone; a hindrance by placing this temptation before me, by your blindness in not understanding the true nature and work of the Messiah. **Thou savourest not (mindest not) the things that be of God:** God's plan of salvation and work of the Messiah, as just before revealed by Jesus (v. 21). **But those that be of men:** the natural, human view of the Messiah, a worldly kingdom, riches, honor, glory, and triumph. There ever has been, and still exists, a tendency to fall into Peter's error, and seek the growth of the church by temporal power, and worldly wealth and greatness, instead of by suffering for the world.

V. The Way to the Kingdom by the Cross, as Applied to Men, is the subject of the remainder of the chapter, at the close of which is the promise that some then living should see the Son of man coming in his glory.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

On Cesarea Philippi, see *Land and Book*, new ed., II., 470-485; Tristram's *Land of Israel*; *Rob Roy on the Jordan*; Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 397, etc. Pinnock's *Christ our King*, on the rock and the keys. *The Biblical Illustrator* on Matthew contains the plans of many sermons on the rock and on the keys, and a good illustration on p. 344. Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus*, II., pp. 79-88; Merrill's *The Reasonable Christ*, "The Man of Sorrows" (Silver, Burdett & Co.); Walker's *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation*, Chap. XII.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. *What think ye of Christ?* is the great question of life. "Of all ideas, none are so important as the religious. Of all religious ideas, none are so important as the right idea of Christ." — *Thomas*.

2. V. 16. Christ's character, works, and kingdom on earth compel us to believe that he is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

3. V. 17. Those have the strongest faith in the divine Son of God who live nearest to God and abide under the influence of his Spirit.

4. V. 18. The true church is sustained and built up by those who have a living faith in the divine Son of the living God. Christ is the great rock foundation on which the apostles rest, but they are rock foundations for the structure above them; and we, resting on them, may be foundation stones for those who come after us.

5. The true church with the indwelling Christ is safe against all the powers of the enemy.

6. The forms of church government, the philosophies of church doctrine may change,

one sect or another may pass away, "but, Lord, thy church is praying yet, a thousand years the same."

7. Every Christian has, in his degree, the keys of the kingdom of heaven. By doing his duty in praying, giving, working, souls will be brought in. By neglect, they will be left out.

8. The rules and administration of every church should be so guided by the Spirit that what they forbid or permit on earth shall be approved in heaven.

9. Vs. 21-23. We are ever tempted to substitute worldly wisdom in religious affairs for the divine wisdom and methods; but the suggestion proceeds from Satan.

10. "Good men," says Richard Baxter, "ofttimes do the devil's work, though they know it not." One of the greatest hindrances to a good cause is often the foolish speeches of its friends.

11. "Every complaint of the weather, every murmur over our lot in life, every word of repining at the trials to which we are subjected of God in our spiritual training, every comment of dissatisfaction with a delayed answer to prayer, is only our way of showing the spirit which would take hold of the Lord and begin to rebuke him for what he does, or for what he permits, in his sphere of control." — *Trumbull*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

TRACE ON THE MAP the journeyings of Jesus from the eastern shore of the Lake of Galilee, where we left him in our last lesson, to Cesarea Philippi, in whose neighborhood we find him in this lesson, touching also upon what was said and done in each place.

SUBJECT: THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

I. WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST, ITS BUILDER AND MAKER (vs. 13-17). The importance of right thoughts about Christ in our inmost souls. Right views are a divine blessing.

Illustration. The sun or the earth as the center of the universe.

Illustration. "If you are one of a number of passengers on an ocean steamer, and the cry is sounded that the vessel is sinking, but that a staunch and commodious boat is at your service if you will take to it, everything for your safety depends on what you think of that boat. If you think there is no danger where you are, you will not look at the boat as really needed by you. If you recognize your danger, but think that the proffered boat is no more trustworthy than the sinking steamer, you will not look at the boat as worthy of your confidence. Refusing to accept the boat as both essential and sufficient, you will be lost with the sinking vessel, because of your opinions about the boat." — *H. C. Trumbull, in S. S. Times*.

II. FOUNDATION STONES (v. 18). Compare the statements in Ephesians 2: 20, and Revelation 21: 14. How we may be foundation stones of the structure still above us. The church founded on a rock will survive all attacks.

Illustration. (1) Jesus' comparison of the house on the rock and the house on the sand (Matt. 7: 24-27). (2) The eight visions of Zechariah, as he encouraged the people to rebuild the temple.

Illustration. In the interpreter's house described in *Pilgrim's Progress* one of the scenes is a blazing fire which Satan is trying to put out by pouring on water. But the more furiously he poured on the water, the more brilliantly the fire burned. To show the pilgrim the secret, the interpreter took him to the other side of the wall against which the fire was burning, and there was a man pouring oil on the flame.

Illustration. There is a picture frontispiece in Wickliffe's Bible which was issued contrary to the commands of the church authorities. There is a fire burning and spreading rather rapidly, representing true Christianity. Around this spreading fire are congregated a number of significant individuals, all trying to devise methods whereby they can put the fire out. One with horns and tail represents Satan. Another is the pope with his red-coated cardinals, who forbade the promulgating of the Bible among the common people. Another represents infidelity. At length one suggests that they all make a united effort to blow on the fire till they blow it out. "The resolution is adopted, and there they are with swollen cheeks and extended lips, blowing upon the fire with all their might, but, instead of blowing it out, they are blowing it up, and they only blow themselves out of breath. The fire is inextinguishable." — *From Richard Roberts, in the Biblical Illustrator*.

III. THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM (vs. 19, 20). In what sense we all hold the keys, and the importance of not being like the scribes who held the door of the kingdom shut, instead of unlocking it for the world.

IV. BY THE WAY OF THE CROSS (vs. 21-23).

LESSON V.— FEBRUARY 3.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.— LUKE 9: 28-36.

Golden Text.— *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.* — MATT. 17: 5.

PUBLIC MINISTRY.

THE SECTION includes the lesson, and the somewhat fuller

Middle of the third year.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.— Matthew 17: 1-13, and Mark 9: 2-13.

The Culmination.

TIME.— Summer of A. D. 29; a week after the last lesson; in the night. (Compare Luke 9: 37.)

PLACE.— Probably Mount Hermon, or some of its spurs, in the vicinity of Cesarea, where Jesus and his disciples were the week before, as we saw in our last lesson, though tradition dating from before the fourth century placed it on Mount Tabor in Galilee. The place of the transfiguration scene is unknown, as are almost all the places in which occurred the most sacred events of Jesus' life, probably because such a place would become a shrine, and be visited as peculiarly holy, while God would have the hearts of men everywhere to be holy places, and all the world holy ground.

“Our common daily life divine
And every land a Palestine.”

CIRCUMSTANCES.— In our last lesson we saw how Jesus for the first time revealed to his disciples that the only way into his kingdom was by the cross. For a week after this nothing is recorded. Their hopes of a glorious kingdom, of a redeemed nation, were all shattered. Could a dead, crucified man be the true Saviour? It was needful that they should know the truth. It was needful, also, that they should see the truth beyond the gloom, and obtain a glimpse of the glory and salvation to which the way of the cross would lead them.

28. ¹ And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

And it came to pass about eight days after these sayings, he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up into the mountain to

¹ Matt. 17: 1. Mark 9: 2.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Prayer Meeting upon the Mountain.— Vs. 28, 29. 28. **About an eight days after these sayings.** Matthew says *after six days; i. e.,* six complete days intervened. Luke says *about,* not exactly, and his eight days include the fractional days at the beginning and end. **He took Peter and John and James.** The other nine disciples were left at the base of the mountain, as we see by the events of the following morning (Mark 9: 14-29). “It is noteworthy that these three are the foremost afterwards in sincere though frail devotion: one offering to die with him, and the others desiring to drink of his cup, and to be baptized with his baptism.”— *Chadwick.*

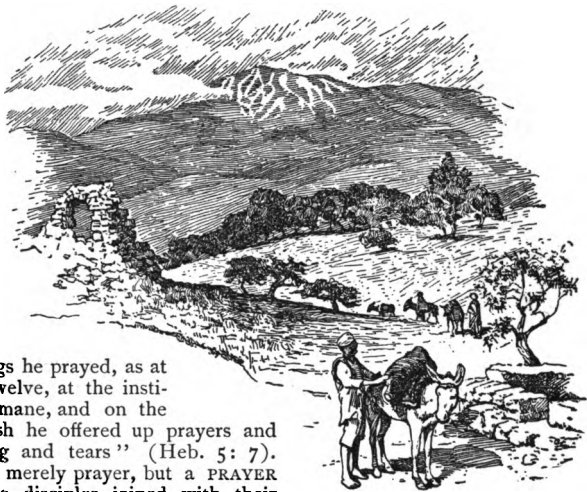
THE FAVORED THREE. (1) At the first glance it would seem as if Jesus exercised some favoritism among his disciples. But this is not the fact. He simply advanced to higher studies those who, by faithfulness in the lower, had made it possible for them to understand and use the higher. Only to those who have been faithful in the lesser things comes the call to the wider kingdom. (2) There were needed witnesses of the transfiguration, in order to make it accomplish its purpose among men, and, when the time came, to reveal the glory of their king; and three witnesses were enough to attest the fact. (3) By having so small a number, it would be more easy to keep, till after the resurrection, these views of Christ from the multitude, who would at this time be almost certain to make a bad use of them, being led either to disbelief, or to looking too much at outward glories, and hence to trying to make Jesus an earthly king. (4) Jesus, in his intense loneliness, craved the human sympathy of those who could best understand him, and to whom he could reveal something of his inner life. (5) He would bring these three into closer relations

29. And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was white and* glistering.

pray. And as he was pray- 29
ing, the fashion of his coun-
tenance was altered, and his
raiment *became white and*
dazzling.

with himself, and reveal to them as much of his own nature and the truths of his kingdom as they could receive. **And went up into a mountain to pray.** That is, *into* some recess in some high mountain.—*Morison*. This statement prepares us to expect some important development in the progress of his mission.—*Bliss*.

JESUS PRAYING. (1) We have glimpses of Jesus' habit of prayer. Not long before this, after feeding the five thousand, he had spent a large part of the night in prayer. And at special crises, and before special blessings he prayed, as at his baptism, when he chose the twelve, at the institution of his supper, in Gethsemane, and on the cross. "In the days of his flesh he offered up prayers and supplications, with strong crying and tears" (Heb. 5: 7). (2) In this case there was not merely prayer, but a **PRAYER MEETING**. Doubtless the three disciples joined with their teacher in prayer. And to this prayer meeting of four was the promise fulfilled that "where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them," and the promise also that their prayer should be heard (Matt. 18: 19, 20). As in music there are sources of power and emotion in a harmony of voices and of parts which no single voice, however perfect, can produce, so in praying there are peculiar blessings in united prayer, a binding of souls together, an uplifting power, a fulness of answer from God. In spiritual things, one plus one is far more than two.



Mt. Hermon.

II. The Transfiguration of Jesus.—V. 29. And as he prayed (Greek, "in his praying"), the transfiguration took place. We know not what he was praying for, but doubtless for strength to endure and to carry on his work, for the faith and enlightenment of his disciples in their gloom, for the coming of the kingdom which seemed to progress so slowly. *The transfiguration was the answer.* **The fashion (or appearance) of his countenance was altered.** Matthew says he "was transfigured before them." The original word is elsewhere in the New Testament rendered "transformed" (as Rom. 12: 2; 2 Cor. 3: 18), and is used of a spiritual change. "The fashion of his countenance was altered by being lighted with radiance both from without and from within."—*Alford*. "The face of Moses had shone (Ex. 34: 29), but as the moon, with a borrowed, reflected light; but Christ's shone as the sun, with an innate, inherent light."—*Matthew Henry*. "His body was steeped in the splendor which was natural to holiness."—*Chadwick*. "On the Mount, a body went into the resurrection or glorified state, and returned without death at either change."—*Bishop H. W. Warren*. Matthew's description of this change is that "his face did shine as the sun." Nothing less than the brightest and most glorious of all objects within human knowledge—so bright that it destroys the eye to gaze directly upon it—could express the radiant glories of Jesus' face, when his heavenly nature shone through the veil of his flesh,—one of the few hints as to our resurrection bodies. **And his raiment was white and glistering.** Literally, *lightning forth*, as though from some *inward* radiance. St. Matthew compares the whiteness of his robes to the light (17: 2); St. Mark to the snow (9: 3); and St. Luke, in this word, to the lightning. (See John 1: 14; Ps. 104: 2; Hab. 3: 4.)—*Cambridge Bible*. "Mark adds, 'as no fuller on earth can white them'; i. e., with a supernatural whiteness. As Christ took on him human nature and condition for converse with man, so here, it appears to me, he is represented as taking on the form and condition of the spirits for the purpose of communion with the spiritual world."—*Abbott*.

30. And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:

31. Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

And behold, there talked ³⁰ with him two men, which were Moses and Elias; who ³¹ appeared in glory, and spake of his (a) decease which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

(a) Or, *departure*.

III. The Conference of the Three Glorified Ones.—Vs. 30, 31. 30. **There talked with him two men.** Human beings. **Which were Moses and Elias:** the Greek form of *Elijah*. These persons were really present. It was not a vision. — *Schaff*. The implication is that the disciples not only saw the appearance, but recognized in the persons Moses and Elijah, as is evident from Peter's proposition (v. 33). — *Abbott*.

31. **Who appeared in glory.** In their glorified bodies; something like that of the transfigured Jesus, but with less radiance.

NOTE (1) the peculiarity of the ending of the earthly life of these two, "of whom one had not died (2 Kings 2: 11), and the other had no sooner tasted of death than his body was withdrawn from under the dominion of death and of him that had the power of death" (Deut. 34: 6; Jude 9). — *Cambridge Bible*. And thus with their resurrection bodies they were peculiarly fitted to appear on this occasion as examples of the complete redemption of man, for which Jesus came to the earth.

NOTE (2). Both, like Christ, "had endured a natural fast of forty days and nights; both had been on the holy mount in the visions of God." — *Alford*.

MOSES, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LAW, was (1) the giver of the Law, and the founder of the Jewish dispensation, which had been for centuries preparing the way for Christ, and which was to be transfigured and transformed by Christ into the heavenly and glorious dispensation of the gospel. (2) Moses was a type of Christ and foretold his coming (Deut. 18: 15, 18). (3) Through him had been instituted the sacrifices which Christ fulfilled and which explained his sacrifice on the cross which so much troubled the disciples.

ELIJAH, THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PROPHETS. (1) They foretold the coming of the Christ and prepared the way for him. (2) The prophets had expressly foretold the sufferings of the Messiah, as well as his kingly glory. (3) Elijah was the one who was to prepare the way of the Lord, by his character and spirit reappearing in John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus.

THE SUBJECT OF THEIR CONVERSATION. **And spake of his decease.** Of his *exodus* (in the Greek), his going out of this evil world, as the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt. "Departure is a most fitting word, for it contains, at the same time, the ideas both of death and ascension. Ascension was as much the natural way for Jesus as death is for us." **Which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.** By being crucified, as he had foretold them just before (vs. 21-27), and rising again from the dead. This conversation would enable the disciples to see the importance and necessity of that which they most dreaded, and which was to them the greatest mystery. The atonement on the cross was the great event of the world's history; this was the culmination of the salvation brought by the Messiah; this was the great act to which all the sacrifices appointed by Moses looked forward, and which gave them meaning and value. It was the beginning and source of the world-wide development of the kingdom of God, and of those glorious times which the prophets had foretold. It is the central theme and power of the church of Christ in all ages.

IV. The Purpose of the Transfiguration.—(1) It is possible that it may have been for the human comfort and aid of Jesus himself, as the angels strengthened him after the agony in Gethsemane. He was nearing the hour of his great trial, and he may have needed a visible manifestation from heaven and messages of assurance and comfort. (2) For the encouragement and enlightenment of the disciples.

The disciples had been startled and shocked by the glimpse which Jesus had given them of his sufferings and death, so contrary to all their expectations of a triumphant Messiah.

(a) The transfiguration opened their eyes to what was beyond,—to the crown beyond the cross, to the triumphs beyond the grave, to the true glories of their King.

(b) It must have tried their faith sometimes to believe that one in a human form, like their own, could be divine. Now their faith is confirmed by seeing his real nature, "his inherent and essential divinity blazing out for once through the serge and sackcloth of his humanity." They see Jesus "as the glorious Sun of righteousness, the Light of the

32. But Peter and they that were with him ¹ were heavy with sleep: and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

33. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said.

Now Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: but (b) when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him.

And it came to pass, as they were parting from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three (c) tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah: not knowing what he said.

¹ Dan. 8: 18; 10: 9.

(b) Or, *having remained awake*.

(c) Or, *booths*.

world, the Brightness of the Father's glory, and the visible Image of the invisible God."—*R. R. Meredith*. (2 Pet. 1: 16; John 1: 14.)

(c) The transfiguration gave the disciples an idea of the interest heaven took in their Master and his work, and of the power that was enlisted on their side. It was to them like the opening of the eyes of Elisha's servant, terrified at the army come to capture his master, so that he could see "the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha" (2 Kings 6: 17). The disciples were few, unarmed, and seemingly powerless in the presence of the mightiest powers in the world arrayed against them. They now realized that "they that be with us are more than they that be against us."

(d) They learned by the examples before them something of what Jesus meant by his resurrection, a difficulty over which they had stumbled (Matt. 16: 21, 22).

(e) It showed them the real harmony and unity of the Old and the New Dispensations. This was one of the most difficult things for them to understand, — how the two dispensations, so different, could yet be as one; how the gospel was the fulfilment of Moses and the prophets; how the new kingdom was the flower and fruit growing on the old tree. So it is in our transfiguration experiences with Christ; the difficulties of the great doctrines of grace vanish, and all become harmonious; and Christians who rejoice in these lofty experiences together, though of many different denominations, yet become one in Christ Jesus, a unity of love and devotion to a common Master.

(f) "It gives a remarkable reality to many intimations of the heavenly state which God sets before us." "He shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body." "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." "We know that when he shall appear we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory." "It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory."

(g) The faith and hope of the disciples were greatly strengthened by seeing examples or specimens, as it were, of redeemed humanity. They saw the rewards of faithful service which would encourage them in many a trial. Here they saw specimen fruits of the gospel they were to preach. It was that men might become such glorious beings as they now saw in Moses and Elijah that they were suffering and toiling. It was worth every cost to bring men into such a state.

V. It is Good to be Here. — Vs. 32, 33. 32. Were (had been) heavy with sleep: and when they were (fully) awake. "Were fully awake," R. V., is one word in the original, and means *having watched through, having remained awake*, for they had overcome the force of sleep. — *Thayer's Gr.-Eng. Lex.* (See Grimm's *Clavis*.) Our English version implies that they fell asleep and were awakened to see his glory, while the original implies that, though heavy with sleep, they kept fully awake. — *Abbott*. "The word (fully awake) appears to be used expressly here to show that it was not merely a vision seen in sleep." — *Alford*. They saw his glory, and the two men. It was a reality, not a dream or vision.

33. As they departed. As they were departing, but before

Booths made from Bushes.



34. While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

35. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, ¹ This is my beloved Son: ² hear him.

36. And when the voice was past, Jesus was found alone. ³ And they kept *it* close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

And while he said these 34 things, there came a cloud and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud.

And a voice came out of 35 the cloud, saying, This is (d) my Son, my chosen: hear ye him.

And when the voice (e) came, Jesus was found alone. And they held their peace, and told no man in those days any of the things which they had seen.

¹ Matt. 3: 17.

² Acts 3: 22.

³ Matt. 17: 9.

(d) Many ancient authorities read *my beloved Son*.

See Matt. 17: 5. Mark 9: 7. (e) Or, *was past*.

they had actually left. Peter said unto Jesus . . . not knowing what he said. He was anxious to prolong their stay and retain the scene, but without realizing the full meaning of his proposal, or its effect on Jesus and his work, on the two heavenly visitors, or upon the disciples themselves. **Master, it is good for us to be here.** So far, Peter spoke the simple fact. The experience was good, and would make him a stronger, better, more useful man all his life long.

THE BLESSING OF THE TRANSFIGURATION EXPERIENCE. That experience which was good for Peter is good for us. We all need the highest and sweetest experiences of the love of Christ, to see him in his beauty and glory, to glance through the gates ajar, to feel the breath of heaven, and hear the voice of God. (1) It widens the outlook, giving earthly things their truer place in life. (2) It gives a clearer view of the end to which we are working, of the state to which God would bring all men. (3) It helps us bear our burdens, overcome our temptations, do our Christian work. We are amid sin, but we have seen the glory of the Master able to conquer it; we dwell amid sorrows, but we know him who has power to transform them; we see the work to be done, but here is new inspiration and hope. Light, victory, glory, heaven shine henceforth on all the dark earth. (4) It helps to change us into the image of Christ.

O Master, it is good to be
Entranced, enrapt, alone with thee;

Till we, too, change from grace to grace,
Gazing on that transfigured face.

— A. P. Stanley.

(5) It gives a permanent uplifting to our character, a continued consciousness of a higher and better life. **And let us make three tabernacles.** Or booths, made from the bushes on the mountain. Here is where Peter began to speak from his bewildered mind. The booths, like those at the Feast of Tabernacles, were for the abode of the three heavenly ones, to retain them, lest they depart, as they seemed about to do. Notice that he speaks of only three, not including himself and friends. "It seemed to him that the hour for the long looked for reign had come. From the slopes of Hermon he would have had the laws of the new kingdom proclaimed, so that all men might recognize the true Messiah attended by the representatives of the Old Dispensation." — *Cambridge Bible*.

VI. **The Voice from Heaven.** — Vs. 34, 35. **34. While he thus spake.** Here was the response to Peter's suggestion, a wise answer to a foolish prayer, denying the petition in order to grant the best answer. **There came a cloud.** A bright cloud (Matthew), like the shekinah of old, betokening the immediate presence of the Father. — *Sadler*. **And overshadowed them:** the whole company, for they entered into the cloud. "It was first above them, and then seemed to descend over them and envelop them." — *Sadler*. The cloud was an incarnation of the ineffable light of God, veiling its glory, yet making it visible to man, as the clouds that veil the sun enable us who cannot gaze into his face yet to see his beauty and glory.

35. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son. God now gives his testimony. It revealed nothing new, but confirmed the old, for it was the same voice which had once before been heard at his baptism, and which should salute him again as he stood on the threshold of his passion; thus, at the beginning, at the middle, and at the close of his ministry. — *Trench*. (See 2 Pet. 1: 17.) **Hear him:** he is worthy of your attention and obedience. He is my messenger, and speaks the truth, the truth you need.

36. And when the voice was past. The disciples fell on their faces in great terror (Matthew). Jesus came and "touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid." Then

they looked up, and **Jesus was found alone.** And told no man in those days. As Jesus commanded them, "until the Son of man be risen again from the dead" (Matthew). Because (1) they could not fully understand its meaning until then, so as to tell it aright, as to Jesus' nature, his death, his resurrection, the future life. (2) Those to whom they told it could still less comprehend its full meaning, and would misunderstand and pervert it. (3) It would give the disciples ability to comprehend Jesus as raised from the dead, and to feel the reality of his perpetual presence after his resurrection. Its chief value would be at that time. The resurrection of Jesus is "the center of all the miraculous narratives, the sun which keeps them in their orbit."

VII. The Descent from the Mount.—When the disciples came down from the Mount of Transfiguration, they found themselves in a wicked world, confronting its evils, and with abundance of common work to do and daily battles to fight. (1) They were to take their heavenly experience with them down into the sinful, suffering world below. It was not to be a mere day dream, a vision, but a power to transfigure life and men. (2) The blessing was not lost because the experience did not continue. The transfiguration was a power, a comfort, a help all the rest of their lives. A deep experience in a Christian, a true revival in a church is not lost because it does not continue in this form. It blesses all the remaining time, and one fails of his best usefulness unless he has had the transfiguration experience. See Carlisle on the high experience of nations.

(3) To retain the value of the experience, it was necessary to go down from the mount and use it in making the world better. It was by shining in the darkness that the light would retain its radiance. Sequestered joys, however blessed, lose their virtue, like the manna kept over contrary to divine command. Christians can retain the blessings of high religious experience only as they go down from the mount and use their experience in transfiguring their daily burdens and cares and attracting men to the cross of Christ.

Use of the Transfiguration Experience.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

On Hermon, see *Land and Book*, new ed., II., 327, 623; Dr. Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 609, gives a glowing account of the view from the top. Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, II., 91, 538; Gunsaulus' *The Transfiguration of Christ*; Trench's *Studies in the Gospels*, p. 184. In Bishop Hall's *Contemplations* there are two most quaint sermons on the transfiguration, preached before James I. Ruskin's *Frondes Agrestes*, pp. 133-137; Sears' *Foregleams*; I. P. Warren's *Parousia*. Sermons by George Whitfield, E. H. Chapin, H. W. Beecher, F. O. Huntington, A. Peabody, C. Kingsley, F. D. Maurice. Poems by Dwight Williams, by Charles Lawrence Ford. Longfellow's *Legend Beautiful*.

LESSONS FROM THE TRANSFIGURATION.

1. Our richest and most heavenly experiences come in and through prayer, and often from united prayer.

2. Only those who have served Christ faithfully in the valleys of daily duty, and have lived near to him, can climb with him the Mount of Transfiguration. Daily faithfulness is the ladder to heaven. "Unless a man has trained himself for his chance, the chance will only make him ridiculous. A great occasion is worth to a man exactly what his antecedents have enabled him to make of it."—*William Matthews*.

3. There are heavenly experiences given occasionally to Christians, as a foretaste of their glory and a glimpse of the spiritual realities ever about them.

4. There is a glory in the Bible and in Christ beyond our ordinary conception, and often veiled, but always there to those who can see.

5. These higher experiences, times of revival, exaltation, Pentecostal seasons, though in form they pass away, yet bless and inspire all the subsequent life. No one can do his best work, or come into his largest usefulness, without such an experience.

6. Christians are nearest together in doctrine when nearest to Christ in heavenly experience. The best Christians differ least in essentials. The cream of all the churches is very much alike. The churches become one on the Mount of Transfiguration. The differences in the light of our little lamps are all absorbed in the radiance of the sun.

7. We obtain glimpses of the glory that awaits us. "He shall change our vile body, that it may be like unto his glorious body."

8. We have a hint of the *employments* of the redeemed. Two were sent to earth on an errand of helpfulness,—came to cheer the Son of God as he set out for the cross. May it not be that in some such service all the redeemed shall engage in glory?

9. We see the state to which God would bring all men, and are inspired with new zeal to bring others to such a Saviour and to such glory.

10. We shall know one another in the other world. Moses and Elijah were known by their names and work. "We are not likely to know any less in heaven than on earth."

11. God's voice is still heard throughout all the world, testifying that Jesus Christ is his beloved Son. It is heard in the wonders of grace, in the triumphs of the gospel, in the good it does in the world, in the experiences of Christians.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SHOW how this lesson fits into the narrative,—the state of gloom, the story of John the Baptist as Elijah, Christ's relation to the laws, his fulfilling the prophets, his wonderful birth.

SUBJECT: THE NATIVE GLORY OF JESUS REVEALED.

I. THE MOUNTAIN PRAYER MEETING (v. 28).

II. THE GLORY OF JESUS REVEALED (v. 29).

Illustrations. (1) Those who had seen Christ only in his human form were like those who had seen only the seeds of the rose or bulb of the lily, but had no vision of the blossoms which could grow out of them. (2) Imagine a palace beautifully lighted within, but with closed blinds and drawn curtains. Then imagine its appearance to one without when the blinds and doors are thrown open, and the brilliance within bursts forth from every opening.

Illustration. Hawthorne compares Christianity to a grand cathedral with divinely pictured windows. Viewed from without, it is impossible to gain the slightest conception of the beautiful forms and radiant colors manifest to those who look at them from within. So it is with Christ. There is a glory in him not visible to those without, but revealed to those who dwell in his heart of hearts.

Illustration. Alumina, common earth, can become oriental ruby, topaz, amethyst, sapphire, or emerald. Silica can become jasper, opal, or Brazilian ruby. Charcoal can become diamond. Why not body become equally lustrous,—nay, luminous? That which is designed to be a temple of the Holy Ghost ought to be fit. It must be capable of such glory that John, not yet out of the body, falls to worship, and finds the object to be only one of his brethren the prophets. Old bodies do not need to be cast aside, but to have their super-amethystine capabilities brought out.—*Bp. H. W. Warren, LL.D., in S. S. Times.*

III. THE CONFERENCE WITH MOSES AND ELIJAH (vs. 30, 33). Emphasizing the importance of Christ's death, and the unity of all the Bible and all the church in Christ.

Illustration. "It has been said, whether by poetry or science it matters not, there is a certain point in the upper air in which all the discordant sounds of the earth,—the rattle of wheels, the chimes of bells, the roll of the drum, the laugh of the child, the moan of the beggar,—meet and blend in perfect harmony."—*Dr. William Adams.* So in this transcendent experience. All are one in heaven and on earth; all truths, all Christians.

IV. THE VOICE FROM HEAVEN (v. 34). With its divine testimony to Jesus. This voice is still heard in the world by the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

V. THE DESCENT FROM THE MOUNTAIN (vs. 35, 36).

Illustration. Only by descending from the mountain to the common daily life could the vision remain in their lives. In "The Legend Beautiful," in Longfellow's *Tales of a Wayside Inn*, a monk had been longing and praying for a better life, and that he might see Jesus himself. At length, one day, the vision came, flooding the room with its radiant shining. While he was gazing entranced upon his Lord, the convent bell tolled the hour when it was his duty to go out and feed the poor. He hesitated, for he hated to leave the vision, and feared it would not remain for his return. Should he who,

"Rapt in silent ecstasy
Of divinest self-surrender,
Saw the vision and the splendor,—

Should he slight his radiant guest,
Slight this visitant celestial
For a crowd of ragged, bestial
Beggars at the convent gate?"

But he heard the voice, —

"Do thy duty; that is best;
Leave unto thy Lord the rest."

He fed the beggars, and, returning, found the vision still there

"When the blessed Vision said,
'Hadst thou stayed, I must have fled.'"

LESSON VI. — FEBRUARY 10.

CHRIST AND THE CHILDREN. — MATT. 18: 1-14.

Golden Text. — *It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.* — MATT. 18: 14.

Third Year of Jesus' Ministry.

The Last Part.

On Return from Cæsarea Philippi.

THE SECTION includes the lesson, and a comparison with the story of Jesus and the children in Matthew 19: 13-15, which occurred some months later, together with the

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS. — Mark 9: 33-50; Luke 9: 46-50.

TIME. — Early autumn, A. D. 29. A few weeks after the last lesson. The disciples had returned from their northern journey with Jesus.

PLACE. — Capernaum, a town near the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. Probably in the house of Peter.

THE INTERVENING HISTORY. — Matthew 17: 14-27; Mark 9: 14-32; Luke 9: 37-45. On descending from the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus healed a demoniac boy. He, with his disciples, moved southward toward Capernaum, and on the way again foretold his death and resurrection. Arriving at Capernaum, he paid the tribute money. The lesson to-day begins soon after.

1. At ¹ the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

In that hour came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who then is (a) greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

¹ Mark 9: 33. Luke 9: 46; 22: 24.

(a) Gr., *greater*.

EXPLANATORY.

I. A Discussion by the Way. Wrong Ideas About the Kingdom of Heaven. — V. 1. Mark 9: 33, 34. In judging any person's character we must always take into consideration the place of any sayings or doings in his life and training. For instance, it is said that Luther called the Epistle of James "an epistle of straw," and worse, and this is quoted even by Farrar as Luther's opinion, but I read also that Luther wrote thus in his earlier writings, and revised his opinion in his maturer writings. It was not Luther as a whole, but Luther's youth that said those things. So we must ever distinguish between what the apostles said and did in their early life under the discipline of Jesus, and what they did when they had learned their lessons. It is unfair to charge upon the apostles what they did in their schooldays. Here they disputed as to which should be greatest, but Dr. Monroe Gibson says, "If there is one thing more characteristic of the apostles in their after life than any other, it is their self-forgetfulness — their self-effacement, we may say. Where does Matthew ever say a word about the sayings or doings of Matthew? Even John, who was nearest of all to the heart of the Saviour, and with him in all his most trying hours, can write a whole gospel without ever mentioning his own name; and when he has occasion to speak of John the Baptist does it as if there were no other John in existence. So was it with them all. And thus did they at last attain true greatness in the kingdom of heaven."

Modesty of the Apostles.

On the way home from the Mount of Transfiguration the disciples had a sharp discussion among themselves as to who should be the greatest.

THE ORIGIN OF THE DISCUSSION. It may have arisen (1) from the fact that three of their number had been selected by Jesus for his companions on the mount; (2) the keys had been given to Peter, and he was to be a foundation stone of the kingdom (16: 18, 19); (3) Judas, as the treasurer, may have had special ambitions, as he thought of being chief of the treasury of the Messiah king; (4) we know that some time after this the mother of James and John came to Jesus, asking for her sons the place nearest the king (Matt. 20: 20, 21); (5) those who had received special favors may, possibly, have usurped some authority, assumed a dictatorial spirit, which would naturally be resented by the others;

Who is the Greatest?

2. And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

3. And said, Verily I say unto you, ¹ Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

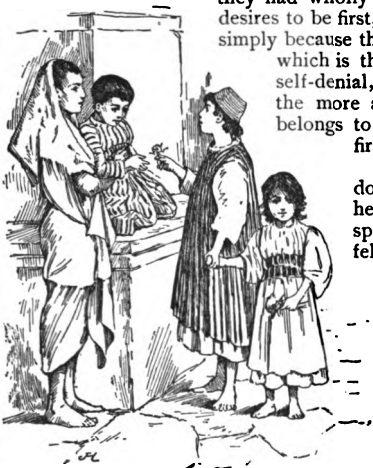
And he called to him a little child, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.

¹ Psa. 131: 2. Matt. 19: 14. Mark 10: 14. Luke 18: 16. 1 Cor. 14: 20. 1 Pet. 2: 2.

(6) all this would be intensified by their expectation that the kingdom would soon be set up.

At Capernaum Jesus asked them about their dispute by the way, but the guilty ones held their peace from shame. After Peter had returned from paying the tribute, at the same time, either these having thought it over, or the others, came unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Will you settle the question for us? "Their question was not, What elements of character make true greatness? who of us is greatest? but, Who of us shall occupy the highest place in your coming kingdom?" — Abbott. "What seductive dreams of greatness and glory rose before these Galilean fishermen as the nearest followers of the great king!" And yet these dreams were but the dim starlight, compared with the noonday glory they actually received in Christ's way of attaining greatness.

II. **The Childlike Spirit the Way into the Kingdom.** — Vs. 2, 3. Mark 9: 35, 36. In answer to their question Jesus gathered the twelve around him, and taught them that they had wholly mistaken the way to greatness, for "if any man desires to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all"; simply because the desire to be first is the exact opposite to the spirit which is the law of Christ's kingdom, — the spirit of love, of self-denial, of helpfulness of others, of humility. Therefore, the more any one has of the desire to be first, the less he belongs to Christ's kingdom. So that the very desire to be first makes him last by the very nature of things.



Children of Palestine.

THE SELF-SEEKING SPIRIT leads to Satan's kingdom, not to Christ's. It is the spirit of hell, not of heaven. It begets evils innumerable and sorrows unspeakable. "Fling away ambition; by that sin fell the angels." *Aut Caesar aut nullus*, "To be first or nothing," leads to crimes and wars. It was Milton's Satan who said, "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven." "How like a mounting devil in the heart rules the unreined ambition."

BUT DISTINGUISH between the strong desire to improve, to have large usefulness, to grow in holiness and love;

and the desire to **Desire to be Best.**

have more honor and power, or even to be better than others. To do the very best we can in everything is our duty.

The song, "Oh! to be nothing," is right if it

means that we seek nothing for ourselves, but wrong if it means that we are willing to be ciphers in God's work.

AN OBJECT LESSON. 2. And Jesus called a little child unto him. His calling shows that he was old enough to walk. Set him in the midst. As an illustration, as a living parable. He then took him in his arms in loving embrace, to make the lesson more impressive, and to show his sympathy with childhood and his love for children. How many who have children in heaven have been comforted by this loving act of Jesus, remembering that he is the same now in heaven as on earth eighteen hundred years ago.

3. Except ye be converted. The word here rendered *be converted* means "turn about so as to face in the other direction." It always signifies a radical and complete change in method, spirit, or course. Here it is: Unless you turn entirely away from this habit of self-seeking, you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven, much less be greatest in it. The aorist tense expresses a past act that still continues. And become as little children: not sinless, for no children are sinless. They all need to be saved

4. ¹ Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

5. And ² whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

6. ³ But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and *that* he were drowned in the depth of the sea.

Whosoever therefore shall ⁴ humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

And whoso shall receive ⁵ one such little child in my name receiveth me :

But whoso shall cause one ⁶ of these little ones which believe on me to stumble, it is profitable for him that *(b)* a great millstone should be hanged about his neck, and *that* he should be sunk in the depth of the sea.

¹ Matt. 20 : 27 ; 23 : 11.

² Matt. 10 : 42. Luke 9 : 48.

³ Mark 9 : 42. Luke 17 : 1, 2.

(b) Gr., a millstone turned by an ass.

from being lost, as we see a little further on (vs. 11, 14). And if none but the sinless could enter the kingdom of heaven, that kingdom, on earth, would be empty. The meaning is, you must have those qualities which are characteristic of childhood, which make the ideal childhood. As Dr. Robinson puts it, "what you would have your child be to you, that be yourself to God." These qualities are : (1) humility ; (2) freedom from ambition, rivalry, or jealousy ; (3) tender and gracious affection ; (4) perfect trust ; (5) obedience ; (6) a teachable spirit ; (7) unworldliness ; (8) indifference to the distinctions of rank and wealth. **Shall not enter** : not only could not be first, as they were seeking to be, but could not even *enter* the kingdom, and have any part in it. Why ? (1) Because the kingdom of heaven is a spiritual kingdom, and the self-seeking spirit is diametrically opposed to its spirit. The childlike spirit is the only gate to that kingdom, just as a musical taste is necessary to entering into the kingdom of music, and a love of literature into the kingdom of learning. Sitting in a music hall, or in a library, does not give entrance into those kingdoms. (2) Because without this spirit, one will not even seek to enter by the only door. He will be self-confident in his own wrong way.

Like Little Children.

III. **The Childlike Spirit the Way to Greatness in the Kingdom.** — Vs. 4, 5. 4. **Whosoever therefore shall humble himself** (so as to be) **as this little child.** To humble one's self is not to think meanly of one's self, not to disparage one's self, not to be unconscious of our powers or knowledge ; but not to think highly of ourselves on this account, not to seek honor or greatness for ourselves ; but simply to use whatever we have, or are, in the humblest service, with no thought of ourselves. Christ knowing that he was the Son of God, yet washing his disciples' feet, is a true example. **The same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven,** for he has most of the heavenly spirit. Only disinterested love can be great. Selfishness dims the crown and diminishes the throne of those who would otherwise be great.

5. **Whoso shall receive** : welcome, show kindness to. — *Carr.* Receive into spiritual fellowship. — *Schaff.* Into his home, and into his heart. — *Morison.* **One such little child** : referring both to children in years, and to those of a childlike spirit ; all who are apparently small, humble, needing instruction. **In my name** : for my sake, from love to me, from sympathy with Jesus' spirit and love. **Receiveth me** : (1) whosoever appreciates childlike lowliness, *when he meets it in others*, appreciates Christianity and Christ. (2) Has taken into his heart my spirit, the characteristics which I love, and which make me what I am. (3) He shall be accepted as having done me a favor in my representative. The act proves that he loves me, and this is the way in which he can express his feelings.

AN OBJECTION ANSWERED. According to Mark (9 : 38-41), at this juncture John remembers an incident of one of their tours which does not seem to agree with the saying of Jesus. They found a man casting out devils in Jesus' name, but did not follow in the company of disciples. Was this man too proud and independent to go with Jesus' followers ? Did he receive Jesus ? And yet he was apparently in the kingdom, for he did the works of a disciple. But Jesus declared that he was in the kingdom, for he had the spirit of the kingdom. This is a good passage for those who are afraid of temperance organizations, Young Men's Christian Associations, and other organizations which are not formally allied to a particular church. It was John, and not the man whom he condemned, who failed in the childlike, Christlike spirit.

Not Against Is For.

IV. **Putting Stumbling Blocks in the Way of the Little Ones.** — Vs. 6-9. 6. **Whoso shall offend** : cause to stumble, or fall into sin. **One of these little ones**

7. Woe unto the world because of offences! for ¹ it must needs be that offences come; but ² woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!

8. ³ Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast *them* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.

Woe unto the world because of occasions of stumbling! for it must needs be that the occasions come; but woe to that man through whom the occasion cometh!

And if thy hand or thy foot ⁸ causeth thee to stumble, cut it off, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire.

¹ Luke 17: 1. ¹ Cor. 11: 19.

² Matt. 26: 24.

³ Matt. 5: 29, 30. Mark 9: 43, 45.

which believe in me: the weakest and feeblest of God's flock, not merely the *children*, but the little ones in intellectual and spiritual power, and in ecclesiastical position and earthly honor. — *Abbott*.

OFFENDING THE LITTLE ONES. Our Lord does not mean "vexing them," "making them angry," or "ill-using them"; but "tempting or leading them into evil." It comes through example, reproaches, and laughter. "That boy has gone a good way in the devil's service who will dare to influence another against his father and mother." — *Dr. Arnold's Rugby School Sermons*. There are many other ways, such as tempting to lie, to drink intoxicating drinks, suggesting religious doubts, breaking down religious habits, sneering at strictness of Sabbath-keeping and obedience to parents. **It were better for him that a millstone.** The word for "millstone" indicates the larger stone mill, in working which an ass was commonly employed, as distinguished from the smaller handmill of Luke 17: 35. **Were hanged about his neck,** etc. We are taken, in imagination, into the presence of a certain dreadful scene. We see a millstone attached to a man's neck. The fastening, passing through the central perforation of the stone, is made secure. It is a sad sight. Yet, turning from another scene, we say, "This *is* better." It is better than that the same man should act the part of a seducer, and entrap a childlike follower of Jesus. — *Morison*. **And that he were drowned in the depth of the sea:** which was within sight. It is better to die a thousand deaths than to lead another into sin, and thus to *murder his soul*. The offender gains a millstone, but loses his life.

7. Woe unto the world: not a wish, but a statement of the fact. **Because of offences:** because there are so many stumbling-blocks and temptations to evil placed in

men's way by the worldly spirit. **For it must needs be that offences come:** it is unavoidable in this sinful world that those who would serve Christ should be tempted. They cannot live in the world and not meet all manner of temptations and hindrances. **But woe to that man by whom the offence cometh:** who is guilty of this most awful of sins, — the leading of others into sin. He that sins himself is weak, but he that leads others into sin is devilish. It is a fiend's business.

8. **If thy hand or thy foot offend thee (lead thee into sin), cut them off.** The meaning is, if objects dear as the right eye and useful as the right hand, — honors, possessions, enjoyments, — stand between us and the righteous heavenly spirit, not merely tempt us, but cause us to fall into sin, if we are unable to battle with and overcome the temptation, we must give them up rather than the heavenly life. **Hand:** the temptation to do what is wrong. **Foot:** going into



Old Mill with Millstone in the Background.

9. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast *it* from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.

10. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven ¹ their angels do always ² behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.

11. ³ For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.

And if thine eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is good for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into the (c) hell of fire.

See that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven. (d)

¹ Psa. 34: 7. Zech. 13: 7. Heb. 1: 14.

² Esther 1: 14. Luke 1: 19.

³ Luke 9: 56; 19: 10. John 3: 17; 12: 47.

(c) Gr., Gehenna of fire.

(d) Many authorities, some ancient, insert verse 11. For the Son of man came to save that which lost. See Luke 19: 10.

forbidden ways. **Halt:** or *lame* from the loss of a foot. **Maimed:** from the loss of a hand. **Eye:** coveting, lusting. **Better . . . to enter into life halt . . . maimed, . . . with one eye:** not that any can be literally such in heaven; but it is better to have eternal life here, to be a true Christian, and to enter into heaven "*without enjoying* the things that caused us to sin, than to enjoy them *here* and then be lost." **Cast into (the) everlasting fire:** that prepared for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25: 41). Fire is the symbol of the most terrible torment, and nothing can put it out. The consequences of sin are eternal.

9. **Hell fire:** the hell, or Gehenna of fire. The literal Gehenna was a valley to the south of Jerusalem, a former scene of Molech worship, and later the place where the refuse of the city was burned with perpetual fires. "Altogether, the uses to which the place had been put made it a graphic symbol for the refuse place of the universe."—*Morison*. This terrible warning comes from the most loving heart in the universe. It is love, not hate, that points out the danger of sin. Love's hand rings the warning fire bell. Love lights the beacon to keep men from being wrecked. He that refuses or neglects to warn is the one who is cruel.

V. **Heaven's Care for the Little Ones.**—Vs. 10-14. 10. **Take heed:** for "evil comes from want of thought as well as want of heart." **That ye despise not,** look down upon, feel contempt or indifference towards. **These little ones,** the children, the childlike believers, the unnoticed, insignificant, lowly. The greater one's needs and weakness, the more sure he is of the notice of Christ. His very weakness is the argument that should encourage him to go to his Saviour. **In heaven their angels: their angels in heaven,** who are their ministering spirits (Heb. 1: 14). "There is in this no sufficient warrant for the popular notion of 'guardian angels,' one angel especially assigned to each individual; it is simply said of believers as a class that there are angels which are *their* angels." "It cannot be positively asserted that the idea of guardian angels is an error, but there is no scripture which proves it true." *The Children's Angels.* The Jews favored "the notion of a guardian angel for each individual, as in the beautiful story of Tobit, and in the rabbinical writings. Compare the Greek fancy of a guiding and protecting *daimon*, as spoken of by Socrates, and especially by Epictetus (I. 14)."—*American Commentary*. **Do always behold the face of my Father:** *i. e.*, children are under the care of the highest order of angels, of those that stand continually in the presence of God (*Cook*) and have most direct and immediate access to him.

THE CHURCH AND THE CHILDREN. If Christ so cares for the young, the childlike, the unnoticed, if the highest angels guard them with loving care, then the church of Christ should give its most loving attention, its best gifts, its most earnest labors to the same classes. That church is most blessed which does this. For (1) it brings its members into closest harmony with Christ and his mission. (2) Its teachings, adapted to these classes, will be best for all. A theology so plain, and simple, and Biblical, so free from metaphysical speculations that a child can understand and love it is the best theology for the daily life of all. (3) It is better to give than to receive.

II. (This verse is omitted from the R. V., because it is not in the oldest manuscript. But it is in Luke 19: 10, and expresses divine truth.) **For:** here is another reason for not

12. ¹ How think ye? if a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?

13. And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that *sheep*, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.

14. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

How think ye? if any man ¹² have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and go into the mountains, and seek that which goeth astray?

And if so be that he find it, ¹³ verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth over it more than over the ninety and nine which have not gone astray.

Even so it is not (e) the ¹⁴ will of (f) your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.

¹ Luke 15: 4.

(e) Gr., *a thing willed before your Father.*

(f) Some ancient authorities read *my*.

despising the little ones. **The Son of man is come to save that which was lost:** the lost race of men. Men are lost, because they are away from Father and home, and do not know the way back; because they are exposed to danger and death, and are unable to rescue themselves.

AN ILLUSTRATION. 12. If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray. This parable is given more fully in Luke 15: 3-7. The lost sheep is a type of the sinner going away from a loving shepherd and the green pastures and still waters he provides, wandering at its own will after forbidden delights, till it is lost in the wilderness of sin, and surrounded by a thousand dangers; unable to find the way back, yet sure to perish unless it does. **Doth he not leave the ninety and nine:** in a place of safety? The angels in heaven do not need the Saviour's presence there, glorious as it is, so much as this lost world needs him. **And goeth:** for he knows every sheep by name; knows which one is lost. **Into the mountains:** places hard and dangerous, expressing the contrast between Jesus' life on earth and his home in heaven. **And seeketh that which is gone astray:** seeks till he find it, says Luke. Jesus uses every means by which to bring back his lost sheep.

The Lost Sheep.

Some have strongly felt the objection to the gospel, that it is not probable that the Son of the infinite God would leave all the measureless stars without redemption, and come to this little world, which is but a mote in the sunbeam compared with other worlds, and here become man and die for us, the almost invisible atoms in this obscure corner of the universe. But here the enigma is solved. Wherever the lost are, there he must go for them. The hearts of all the family go after the lost one.

13. **He rejoiceth more of that sheep.** This sheep is of no more value than the others, but its rescue opens the fountains of joy. And he calls all to rejoice with him. Heaven is full of joy at the repentant sinner (Luke), because he is saved from measureless woe and unfathomed depths of sin to blessedness and holiness beyond the power of the heart to conceive.

14. **It is not the will of your Father . . . that one of these little ones, children, and the weakest, humblest believer, should perish:** fail of holiness and heaven. God's desire is that all men be saved. He has done everything for their salvation which wisdom and love can do. And those who are lost, are lost because they refuse to be saved. They will not come to Jesus. They resist every effort divine love can make to redeem them. Every lost soul is a moral suicide. They stumble over the very steps to heaven.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

C. R. Robinson's *Church Work*, "The Childlike Spirit"; Arnold's *Rugby Sermons*, Vol. II., Chap. VIII., on v. 6, and Vol. III., Chap. XXIII., on v. 10. On vs. 1-4, "The Childlike Spirit," see Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. V., chapter on *Peace*; and the poem of Rev. Theodore Monod, in *Gospel Hymns* No. 3, "None of Self and All of Thee." On the parable of the lost sheep, see Wm. M. Taylor's *The Lost Found*, and his *Parables of Our Saviour*; also Arnot, Guthrie, Cummings, and Trench, on *The Parables*. For illustrations, see *Seeds and Sheaves*, "Mr. Roger's Dream"; *The Snowflake Album* of the Am. Tract Soc., "Beautiful Snow"; and the hymn, "The Ninety and Nine."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. V. 1. One of the greatest dangers of the church is the desire of some to be greater than others; to have more honor, influence, wealth, power.

2. This desire excites contentions and quarrels, awakens envy, injures the character, tempts to wrong conduct, is selfish, and entirely contrary to the spirit of Christ.

3. He only is truly great who loves his fellowmen, and, forgetting self, desires to do the most good to the most people.

4. Teachers will do well if they learn from Jesus to use object lessons and illustrations in their teaching.

5. Vs. 6, 7. The greatest of all wrongs is to lead the innocent, the weak, the trusting, into sin.

6. Jesus warns men of their danger, because he loves them. It is cruelty, not love, which denies the punishment of sin, or lessens the sense of its danger.

7. V. 10. All the good in heaven and on earth care for the children, for the weak, the obscure.

8. The true church ever makes the children her dearest care; builds the edifices, arranges the services, gives her best members for the best care and training of the little ones.

9. The true church always gives itself to the work of saving and helping the weak, the unfortunate, the unnoticed; seeks first, not the great, but the needy.

10. God knows each of his sheep by name. He *misses* us if we stray away.

11. God desires that all men be saved, for he has prepared the way for all, invited all, sends his Spirit upon all, gives his Son for all.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Gather together all that is said on this subject, and keep close to it, as it is the only lesson we shall have upon it.

SUBJECT: CHILDREN AND THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN.

I. A DISCUSSION BY THE WAY. FALSE IDEAS OF THE KINGDOM (v. 1). Learned from the parallel accounts. A similar discussion just before the Lord's Last Supper.

Illustration. A man on a wrong train. It starts from the right station, has good cars, but it is on a track which leads far away from the place he wishes to reach.

II. THE CHILDLIKE SPIRIT THE CONDITION OF ENTERING THE KINGDOM (vs. 2, 3).

Illustration. At a late convention, Mr. B. F. Jacobs said that the triumphs of the church were to be won among the children; and if men and women were to be converted, it was to be when they were children.

"I'll prove that statement to you," said Mr. Jacobs, and he called upon those in the audience who were converted after they were 50 years of age to rise. An old lady and a venerable-looking gentleman were the only ones to respond. "Two," said Mr. Jacobs. "Thank God for that. Now will those who were converted after 35 please rise?" Not more than half a dozen responded; but as Mr. Jacobs called for those who were converted when under 21 years of age, nearly every one in the audience rose to their feet. Mr. Jacobs smiled; and as the audience appreciated the value of the object-lesson he had taught in support of his statement, the applause was spontaneous and hearty.—*Boston Journal*.

III. THE CHILDLIKE SPIRIT THE WAY TO TRUE GREATNESS (vs. 4, 5).

IV. STUMBLING BLOCKS IN THE WAY OF THE LITTLE ONES (vs. 6, 9).

Illustration. The story of Archbishop Cranmer, who, having recanted to save his life, afterwards stood for the truth and was burned as a martyr; while at the stake he held out his hand in the flames, saying, "This hand has offended; this unworthy hand!"

Illustration.

"For sadder sight than eye can know,
Than proud bark lost, or seamen's woe,
Than battle fire, or tempest cloud,
Or prey bird's shriek, or ocean shroud,—
The shipwreck of the soul."

But there is one sadder sight, and that is the shipwrecking of others' souls, holding out the false light that ruins others as well as ourselves.

V. HEAVEN'S CARE FOR THE LITTLE ONES (vs. 10, 14).

Illustration. Reading the hymn, "The Ninety and Nine" will touch many hearts.

LESSON VII. — FEBRUARY 17.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN. — LUKE 10: 25-37.

Golden Text. — *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* — LEV. 19: 18.

*Third Year of Ministry.
Near the Close.
Five Months before the
Crucifixion.*

THE SECTION includes Luke 10: 1-24, the lesson, verses 25-37, and a comparison with Jesus' answer to the same question on another occasion (Matt. 19: 16-22).

THE INTERVENING HISTORY includes some discourses of Jesus, Matthew 18: 15-35; and Luke 9: 57-62; the final departure from Galilee; the discourses contained in John 7: 11 to 10: 21 in Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles; and the mission of the seventy, Luke 10: 1-24.

TIME. — November, A. D. 29, between the Feast of Tabernacles, October 11, and the Feast of Dedication, early in December. A few weeks after the last lesson, during the final journey of Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem.

PLACE. — Probably Perea, beyond Jordan. It is not certain just where in Jesus' journey to Jerusalem this event took place. Robinson puts it near Jerusalem.

DISTINCTIONS. — This incident is peculiar to Luke, and is not the same with that of the rich young ruler, recorded by Matthew (19: 16-22), Mark (10: 17-22), and by Luke later on (18: 18-23). The same question is asked in each case, as no doubt the subject was one of frequent discussion; but otherwise the occurrences differ. It is well, however, to read the other account in connection with this lesson, in order to obtain a complete view of Jesus' answer to the great question about eternal life.

25. And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, ¹ Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, (a) Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?

¹ Matt. 19: 16; 22: 35.

(a) Or, Teacher.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Great Question, How to Inherit Eternal Life. — V. 25. **And behold, a certain lawyer:** a lawyer was one who was a student and teacher of the Jewish law. It would take the two terms theologian and lawyer, in our day, to describe the lawyer of those days; for, with the Jews, state and church were united, and there was no such distinction between religious and legal rules and studies as with us. They interpreted and explained the law and the many Jewish regulations derived from it. The distinction between a *lawyer* and a *scribe* is very indefinite; as a future historian might find it hard to define the distinction between a *D. D.* and a *Rev.*, as applied to modern ministers. **Stood up:** rose to indicate his purpose of a discussion. This implies that Jesus was in some house, perhaps discoursing on this very subject of eternal life. **And tempted him:** rather, tested or tried him as to his teachings, whether they were wise and good, and accorded with, or different from the teachings of the scribes. He tested him by some of the controverted questions of the day. **Saying, Master:** or teacher — equivalent to Rabbi or Rabboni. Jesus was an acknowledged teacher, as the lawyer was. **What shall I do to inherit eternal life?** How can I become a child of God, and as a child inherit from my Heavenly Father, and so have possession of eternal life?

ETERNAL LIFE. (1) Eternal life is the true spiritual life of the soul, — that which is natural to it in its highest state. (2) It is the divine life which is implanted in us when we are born of the Spirit and become children of God. It begins in this life; but (3) being divine and natural, it endures forever. (4) It is the life that belongs to heaven, which inspires all heavenly beings and makes heaven what it is. As Dr. John Brown beautifully says, "The perfect (tense) of the verb *live* is *love*." (5) It is the condition of all the highest blessings. These cannot even be known without the spiritual life. All pleasures and delights are nothing to the dead. (6) Eternal life, from its very nature, produces a perfect morality, the noblest conduct. (7) Of all things in the world eternal life is most worth the seeking.

26. He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readeſt thou?

27. And he answering ſaid, ¹ Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength, and with all thy mind; and ² thy neighbour as thyſelf.

And he ſaid unto him, ²⁶ What is written in the law? how readeſt thou?

And he answering ſaid, ²⁷ Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God (ð) with all thy heart, and with all thy ſoul, and with all thy ſtrength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyſelf.

¹ Deut. 6: 5.

² Lev. 19: 18.

(ð) Gr., *from*.

II. The Answer. — Vs. 26-28. 26. He ſaid unto him, What is written in the law? An apt queſtion, ſince it was a lawyer who had aſked him, whoſe office it was to underſtand and explain the law. **How readeſt thou?** How do you underſtand the law to teach regarding this? — *G. W. Clark*. It is noticeable that Jeſus leads him away from tradition directly to the law itſelf. In the Word of God is the only place to find a true answer to this great queſtion. The answer of Jeſus was very courteous and complimentary to the lawyer.

NOTE that what we gain from the Bible depends largely on how we read it, with what ſpirit and aim. Different men ſee different things in nature. Ruſkin ſays that men ſee blue ſkies in Italy becauſe they are looking for them. Men brought up in different denominations and with different ſpecialties do not read the Bible exactly alike. A comparison of commentaries furniſhes a good example of this.

27. And he answering ſaid. He replied by quoting the great ſummary of man's duty towards God in Deuteronomy 6: 5 (which, it appears, was recited in the daily prayers of the Jews), and a ſtatement of the law of love from Leviticus 19: 18. — *Cook*.

SUPREME LOVE TO GOD. Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God. Love is an *all-inclusive* affection, embracing not only every other affection proper to its object, but all that is proper to be *done* to its object; for, as love ſpontaneously ſeeks to pleaſe its object, ſo, in the caſe of men to God, it is the native well-ſpring of a voluntary obedience. It is, beſides, the moſt *personal* of all affections. — *D. Brown*. Some perſons would make religion to conſiſt of little elſe than a ſelf-denying courſe of the practice of virtue and obedience. They make it a kind of houſe-of-correction work. But, no! I love the ſervice of my God; like the bird, I fly at liberty on the wings of obedience to his holy will. — *Dr. Chalmers*. **With all thy heart.** *Heart* denotes in general terms the affection and will; affectionate choice, "the love of conſciouſ reſolve, expreſſed with will, which muſt at once become a ſecond nature." — *Cremer's Biblico-Theol. Lexicon*. The *heart* is the center of all physical and ſpiritual life, the *soul* or *mind*, as it is the fountain and ſeat of the thoughts, paſſions, deſires, appetites, affections, purpoſes, endeavors. — *Thayer's N. T. Greek-Eng. Lex.* "It is the central focus from which all the rays of the moral life go forth." — *Godet*. Our love to God muſt be fervent, warm, living. **And with all thy ſoul.** *Soul* is the individual exiſtence, the perſon himſelf, the ſeat of the will, diſpoſitions, deſires, character. The two words are united to teach that the entire, undivided perſon muſt ſhare in that which it has to perform with the heart. — *Cremer's Biblico-Theol. Lexicon*. **With all thy ſtrength.** Enjoins the full and entire devotion of all theſe powers. — *Cook*. Love to God that is not ſupreme is not love at all. **With all thy mind.** This commands our intellectual nature: "Thou ſhalt put *intelligence* into thine affection" — in oppoſition to a blind devotion, or mere devoteeism.

The Heart.

Why Love God?

REASONS FOR LOVING GOD SUPREME. (1) He is ſupremely good; he is the ſum of all good. He that loves God loves all that is good and hates all that is evil. (2) He is not only good, but lovable. His goodneſs is attractive; it is worthy of love. (3) All we have and are we owe to him; and the only way in which we can make any return is to love him and obey him in love. That is all that is ours to give; to withhold it is unutterably mean. (4) "The beſt thing in man is love, and God wants the beſt. He wants ſuch love as a child gives his parents, — appreciative, joyous, clinging, truſtful love. Aught colder is unworthy of the man who gives or the God who gets it." — *Glover*. (5) Such love not only honors God, but elevates man. Love is the moſt ennobling act of the ſoul; and the nobler and higher the object and the more intense the love, ſo much the more is the one who thus loves ennobled, purified, enlarged, exalted in nature. (6) "In him are found all that ought to move the higheſt affections of men, — purity, thoughtfulness of others, generosity, helping grace, pardoning mercy, ſelf-forgetfulneſs, and ſelf-sacrifice

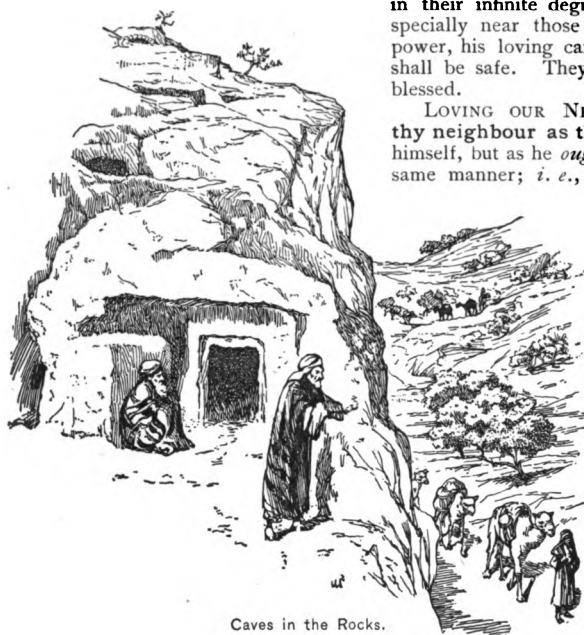
28. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and ¹ thou shalt live.

29. But he, willing to ² justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour?

And he said unto him, 28
Thou hast answered right:
this do, and thou shalt live.
But he, desiring to justify 29
himself, said unto Jesus,
And who is my neighbour?

¹ Lev. 18: 5. Ezek. 20: 11, 13, 21. Rom. 10: 5.

² Luke 16: 15.



Caves in the Rocks.

in their infinite degree.” — *Glover*. (7) God draws specially near those who thus love him. His infinite power, his loving care protect and enfold them. They shall be safe. They shall be useful. They shall be blessed.

LOVING OUR NEIGHBORS AS OURSELVES. **And thy neighbour as thyself.** (1) Not as he *does* love himself, but as he *ought* to love himself. (2) After the same manner; *i. e.*, freely and readily, sincerely and unfeignedly, tenderly and compassionately, constantly and perseveringly. — *Burkitt*. Cases arise where man ought to love his neighbor more than his life, — physical life, — and has done so, sacrificing it for his fellow, his country, and the church, in imitation of the example of Christ and the **The Measure of Love.** martyrs.

— *Schaff*. This love is the principle in the heart from which flows the Golden Rule in practice and the perfect keeping of all the commandments which refer to our duties to our fellow-men. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” “It is inconceivable that God should require from his rational creatures any-

thing less, or in substance anything *else*, under any *dispensation*, in any *world*, at any *period*, throughout eternal duration.” — *D. Brown*.

28. **Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live.** Shalt have already eternal life, the life of heaven. For this heart of love is eternal life. It is the life of saints and angels in Paradise. It makes heaven what it is. No outward glories and delights can make heaven without this spirit of love. And every person who goes to heaven must of necessity have at least the beginnings of this love, which will grow into its perfect fullness.

NOTE. This answer of Christ touched the lawyer’s conscience, and showed him that he had not yet attained to eternal life, if that was the necessary condition of eternal life. Seeing what we must become in order to be saved convicts us of our sin and failure, and our need of a Saviour from our sins.

NOTE. The condition of salvation is the same in the Old Testament and the New. Where, then, is the superiority of the gospel? It reveals the atonement by which salvation was made possible to all in the **Superiority of the Gospel.** old as in the new dispensation; it accomplishes in a new and better way for far greater numbers what was gained with difficulty by the few; it provides new motives, new forces, new hopes, new methods, new light, new truth. Jesus Christ is *the way* to this love of God and man, which is salvation.

III. Another Great Question: Who is my Neighbor? — V. 29. But he, willing (wishing, desiring) to justify himself; to make himself appear right, both to his own conscience and to Jesus. Said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbour? For the degree in which he had kept the law of love would depend on the answer to this question. If his neighbor meant his personal friends, he may have kept the law in some measure, or, at least, had come much nearer it than if “neighbor” included a wider circle. Doubtless

30. And Jesus answering said, A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded *him*, and departed, leaving *him* half dead.

31. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, ¹he passed by on the other side.

32. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked *on him*, and passed by on the other side.

Jesus made answer and ³⁰said, A certain man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho; and he fell among robbers, which both stripped him and beat him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

And by chance a certain ³¹priest was going down that way: and when he saw him, passed by on the other side.

And in like manner a Le- ³²vite also, when he came to the place, and saw him, passed by on the other side.

¹ Psa. 38: 11.

this was a disputed question among the lawyers. "Unwind that word 'neighbor' and it measures off the whole of our earthly life, it covers all our practical, every-day duties. But to the Jewish mind 'neighbor' was simply 'Jew' spelt large."—*Burton*.

IV. The Answer, by the Parable of the Good Samaritan. — Vs. 30-35.

30. Jesus answering said: by a parable or illustration, which very possibly may have been founded on fact. A certain man went (was going) down from Jerusalem to Jericho. The road, or path—for there was no such road as is familiar to us—from Jerusalem went down literally, to Jericho, the descent in less than twenty miles being about thirty-five hundred feet. It was also a very dangerous road, lying much of the way in a deep ravine through soft rocks in which caves and chambers abounded, affording shelter to miscreants, who from *The Jericho Road*.

sallied forth to prey upon travellers. It is still necessary to have an escort in passing over that road.—*Bliss*. The road now runs in doubtless the very same line as in the time of Christ, hardly varying anywhere more than a few feet. Things are not as bad as they used to be, though the road is not altogether safe to-day. But it is only a few decades since travelling has been safe on the most frequented roads in civilized countries. The roads about London a hundred years ago and some routes in the United States within a much more recent period will furnish many parallels to the dangerous state of the road from Jerusalem to Jericho.—*Isaac Hall*, in *S. S. Times*. Eight hundred men are now (1889) at work on a new road from Jerusalem to Jericho and the Jordan.—*Bp. J. H. Vincent*, in *N. Y. Independent*, March 7, 1889. And fell among thieves. Highway robbers, banditti. "Forty thousand workmen were dismissed from work on the temple of Herod at this time."—*Van Doren*. Some of these may have turned to robbery for a living. Stripped him of his raiment: implying that he was despoiled of everything he had.—*G. W. Clark*. And wounded him: by inflicting blows upon him. So the Greek.

31. And by chance there came down a certain priest. Jericho was one of the residences of the priests. "About twelve thousand priests and Levites who used to attend the temple, in courses, resided at Jericho."—*Van Doren*. If any man on earth might reasonably be expected to lend a helping hand to the wounded traveller, a countryman, and also the seed of Abraham, this priest was he.—*Bliss*. He passed by on the other side: not of the road only, but of the ravine.—

Ellicott. Excuses were not wanting: there was danger in delay from *Passing by on the* the same or other robbers; it was not the priest's business; he was *other side*. perhaps hastening to the temple service, or from it, to reach Jericho before nightfall; he was unfamiliar with wounds, and inapt in caring for them; the man was very likely too far gone to be recovered, and the priest would then have a useless burden on his hands.—*Abbott*. There may also have been fear of ceremonial defilement, if the man should die on his hands. And he felt that others would help the man if he did not. "The fact is, it needed something more than sympathy to make them turn aside and befriend the wounded man; it needed physical courage, and that of the highest kind."—*Barton*. Notice how often in time of great danger, as in a fire or a wreck, even respectable men lose their courtesy and helpfulness.

32. And likewise a Levite. A Levite was one of the tribe of Levi; a priest was of the family of Aaron in that tribe. The Levites performed the humble services of the temple, as cleaning, carrying fuel, and acting as choristers. Levites were also writers, teachers, preachers, and literati. The scribes and lawyers were frequently of this tribe, which, in fact, was set apart by Moses as the intellectual body in the nation.—*Whedon*. Came and looked on him. He did a little more than the priest, but resisted the impulse.

33. But a certain ¹ Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was; and when he saw him, he had compassion on him,

34. And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two ² pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him: and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee.

36. Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among the thieves?

But a certain Samaritan, ³³ as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he was moved with compassion, and came to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring on them oil and wine; and he set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

And on the morrow he ³⁵ took out two (c) pence, and gave them to the host, and said, Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, I, when I come back again, will repay thee.

Which of these three, ³⁶ thinkest thou, proved neighbour unto him that fell among the robbers?

¹ John 4: 9.² Matt. 20: 2.

(c) See marginal note on Matt. 18: 28.

His slight and false compassion withered away; and he also passed by on the other side. The Greek text followed by the revisers makes the conduct of this man exactly like that of the priest. "Being in the line of religious work does not necessarily make a man religious."

33. But a certain Samaritan. The Samaritans were half heathen, a mixed race of Jews and Gentiles, accepting the Pentateuch only as their Bible, erroneous in some points of doctrine, and greatly despised by the priests and Levites. The Lord selects this case, but he does not mean to teach by it that the Samaritans, Jews, as a people, were worse than the Samaritans. "Yet it is a

fair inference that some men are better in practice than their wrong creed would lead us to expect; while others, who are theoretically right, may be practically all wrong." — *Prof. Riddle*.

"It is remarkable that, to this day, poor, weak, and insignificant as is the Samaritan remnant which lingers at Nablous, the ancient Shechem, the Jews have a greater animosity toward them than they have toward either Christians or Moslems. Not only do they refuse to eat with them, as unclean, but they will not enter into any of the business transactions of every-day life with them; nor will a Jew guide accompany a traveller into the Samaritan quarter. The heretic, as they deem him, is much worse than the infidel." — *Canon Tristram*. Note, in this connection, the noble spirit which Christ showed in this picture of a Samaritan, for it was but a short time before this that he had himself been rejected by Samaritans in such an ungracious way that the disciples wished to invoke fire from heaven upon them (Luke 9: 51-56).

34. Bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine. This was a well-known method of cure in the East. Greek and Latin physicians commended it. — *Jacobus*. The wine was poured in to cleanse the wound, and the oil to assuage the smart. They were highly esteemed remedies. Set him on his own beast. His care of the wounded man must have consumed considerable time; but this was the greatest magnanimity, and much more than common kindness required. Real love does not ask how little, but how much it may do. — *Jacobus*. To an inn. This is the only place where an inn, as we understand the word, a house for the reception of travellers, kept by a host, as distinguished from an empty caravansery, is mentioned. — *Alford*. And took care of him: gave him his personal attention, which is more costly and more blessed than money.

35. And on the morrow . . . he took out two pence (denarii): from his girdle. Shilling is a more exact translation of "denarius" than penny. It is worth about 17 cents. But two such pence would be equivalent to \$3 in our day. Whatsoever thou spendest more, etc. He did all he could, consistently with his other duties.

36. Which now of these three . . . was (proved) neighbour unto him. The Lord's question has been admirably put as, "Which



Pence. (Denarius.)

37. And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. And Jesus said unto him, Go, and do thou likewise.

now of these three understood best what thou desirest to know?" — *Sadler*. Notice that the lawyer had asked, *Who is my neighbor*, whom I am to love as myself? Jesus gives three characters, and asks, Which of these showed by his acts that he was indeed a neighbor? But one answer could be given. — *G. W. Clark*.

37. **Go, and do thou likewise.** That is, your question is answered by yourself: "He to whom you *ought* thus to show mercy in order to become *his* neighbor is your neighbor." With this interpretation of the term "neighbor," the lawyer would be convicted of sin and of the need of a Saviour.

V. Modern Applications. — **FIRST.** TO OUR SOCIAL RELATIONS. "The whole parable is an amplification of the Golden Rule." If we really belong to the kingdom of heaven on earth, and cherish a true hope of a home in the city of God hereafter, then we must possess and cherish the spirit of loving our neighbor as ourselves, according to the definition of "neighbor" Jesus has here given **Modern good Samaritan.**

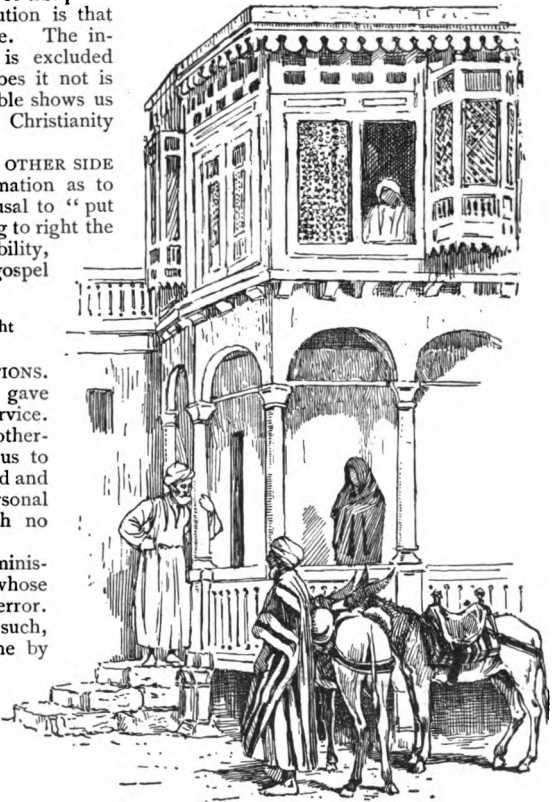
us. Both as individuals and as a nation we are to treat the poor, the despised, the outcast, the degraded as our neighbors, and give them all possible aid, and not pass them by on the other side. We are to treat the Indians as our neighbors; and the foreigners as our neighbors; and the colored race as our neighbors; and the prisoners and the neglected and ignorant as our neighbors. Every town and city, every part of our nation has some portion of this problem on its hands. Its only solution is that which Christ gives in this parable. The individual that refuses to do this is excluded from heaven. The nation that does it not is doomed to destruction. The parable shows us OUR NATION'S HOPE. True, pure Christianity will save us.

SECOND. PASSING BY ON THE OTHER SIDE is seen in the avoidance of information as to "how the other half lives," a refusal to "put yourself in his place," in neglecting to right the wrongs that come within our ability, neglecting to invite others to the gospel privileges we enjoy.

"Evil is wrought by want of thought
As well as by want of heart."

THIRD. PERSONAL MINISTRATIONS. The good Samaritan not only gave money, but his own personal service. By giving, we reach many whom otherwise it would be impossible for us to help. But there is a power for good and a reflex benefit to ourselves in personal sympathy and ministrations, which no money can bring.

NOTE that Jesus represents the ministrations as coming from one whose professed belief was greatly in error. Not that more good is done by such, but to show that good may be done by such, and that the main emphasis is on the life and on the heart-creed that produces a good life. Most men have two creeds, — one of the head, which they have reasoned out, a theoretical creed; the others their regulative creed, the creed of heart and



Eastern Inn.

life. In the perfect man these are coincident. But it is very possible to have them quite at variance. The life-creed is the real creed, and if this is right, and leads to good works, the man has true faith, as well as works. (Comp. Matt. 25: 31-46.)

FOURTH. JESUS CHRIST THE GOOD SAMARITAN. (1) The human race is the man fallen among thieves, robbed of his hope, his character, his righteousness, his joy, his heaven; sick unto death through sin, "from the sole of the foot to the crown of the head, no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sores." (2) The robbers are Satan and his emissaries,—all who mislead and tempt. (3) Those who pass by on the other side are all those religions and societies which are unable to save men; which give good advice, but give no power to practise it; which point to heaven, but cannot show the way; which say "be good," but cannot forgive the past, nor renew the heart. Self-righteousness, formalism, infidelity, godless education pass by on the other side. (4) Jesus himself is the ideal good Samaritan. He had compassion; he came to man; he bound up his wounds at infinite cost; he poured upon him health, and comfort, and strength; he bore his burdens of sin and sorrow; he brought him to his church, "the Palace Beautiful"; he cares for him to the end, restoring him to perfect spiritual health.

FIFTH. TO TEMPERANCE. 1. The multitudes of people under the influence of strong drink, in various degrees, are the victims. 2. Liquor-sellers, saloon-keepers, and all "who put the bottle to their neighbor's lip" are the robbers. 3. Those who pass by on the other side are (1) All who take no interest in temperance. (2) All who do not look after those who are beginning a downward course. (3) All who vote wrong on the temperance question. (4) All societies which encourage the use of strong drink. (5) All churches which do not use all their *Temperance.* influence in favor of temperance. (6) All who are too busy to do any temperance work. (7) All towns which permit saloons or tempt their citizens. 4. The temperance societies of every kind, the churches, the law and order leagues, temperance schools are all good Samaritans. Every one of us should do all we can, personally, giving money, by joining societies, at real cost to ourselves, that we may destroy the bands of thieves and save their victims.

SIXTH. TO MISSIONS. Christian missions are among the most notable examples of the spirit of the good Samaritan. This parable answers every objection that can be brought against them. So long as a single land remains unenlightened by the Christian religion, every church should have the spirit of the missionary who would leave even heaven to preach the gospel.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Trench, Wm. Taylor, Arnot, Guthrie, on *The Parables*; Professor Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, on "Eternal Life". On journeys from Jerusalem to Jericho, see Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 196; Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 416. Stapfer's *Palestine in the Time of Christ*, p. 298, on doctors of the law, and p. 255 on oil for wounds; *Sermons* by D. L. Moody, "Who is my Neighbor?" Foster's *Cyclopædia of Poetical Illustrations*, Nos. 3955 to 3957; Guthrie's *Sermons*, "Eternal Life." *Illustrations of the folly of seeking this world at the expense of eternal life* are found in Prescott's *Conquest of Mexico*, p. 75, and in Dr. A. P. Peabody's *Plutarch's Delay of Divine Justice*, p. 25. *Illustration of the parable*, in Stanley's *Jewish Church*, I., 19-24, "The Story of Abraham and the Infidel."

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SUBJECT; THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE.

I. SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE (v. 25). The one most important question of life. But it belongs to this life, as well as the next.

Illustration. Bunyan represents Christian as fleeing from his home in the city of Destruction, running with all his might, with his fingers in his ears, and crying out, "Life, life!" So earnestly should we all seek eternal life, if we realized its importance. He sought, also, to have his neighbors go with him to eternal life.

II. THE CONDITION OF ETERNAL LIFE (vs. 26-28). The one condition is to have the spirit and the life which make heaven,

Illustrations. If one would join a choir, he must learn to sing. If he would speak in a foreign tongue, he must learn the language.

Illustration. This is well illustrated by the touching story, *The Sisters' Dream of Heaven*, a five-cent tract, published by Wm. Knowles, Gospel Tract Depot, New York.

Illustration. The heart of love is a fountain of living waters, and the commandments are the channels through which the streams flow out. The commandments are the fences by the roadside which show love the way in which it should go.

III. ILLUSTRATED BY A PARABLE (vs. 29-37).

Illustration. Jewish story of Abraham and the infidel, in Stanley's *Jewish Church*, I., 19-24, and Foster's *Cyclopædia of Illustrations*, I., No. 592; also Leigh Hunt's *About Ben Ahdem*.

IV. MODERN APPLICATIONS.

LESSON VIII.—FEBRUARY 24.

CHRIST AND THE MAN BORN BLIND.—JOHN 9: 1-11.

Golden Text.—*I am the light of the world.*—JOHN 9: 5.

THE SECTION includes John 9: 1-38, together with the **SIMILAR CURES OF BLIND MEN**, such as blind Bartimeus, Matthew 20: 29-34, Mark 10: 46-52, Luke 18: 35-43, which took place several months later; also the cure, a few months before, of the blind man at Bethsaida, Mark 8: 22-26.

TIME.—A Sabbath (v. 14) in October, A. D. 29; probably soon after the Feast of Tabernacles referred to in 7: 2. Andrews places this just before our last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, near one of the gates of the temple.

JESUS.—Nearly thirty-three years old, toward the close of the third year of his ministry, about six months before his crucifixion.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—After the transfiguration, in the summer of A. D. 29, Jesus returned slowly to Galilee, teaching his disciples by the way. We find him next at Capernaum (Les. VI.). In the autumn Jesus went to Jerusalem to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, which that year began October 11. The discourses of Jesus at that time, as he walked around the city and temple, are recorded in John 7 and 8. It was on one of his walks that he met the blind man of to-day's lesson.

i. And as *Jesus* passed by, he saw a man which was blind from *his* birth.

And as he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Blind Man.—V. 1. And as *Jesus* passed by. Not the passing from the temple, referred to in the last verse of chapter 8, which is another word in the Greek, as in the R. v., but as he was passing along on his way about the city. **He saw** (looked at) a man. Jesus did not wait for the man to come to him, but he took the initiative; the blind man was under great disadvantages, and might not be able to hear much about Jesus, or to know when he was near in the crowds and noise of the city. Jesus is ever specially helpful to the weak and unfortunate, and "answers before they call." The sad history of this man may have been already familiar to his disciples, as he was evidently a well-known beggar in Jerusalem, one with whose story many were acquainted (v. 8). **Which was blind from his birth.** Of the six miracles connected with blindness which are recorded in the Gospels, this is the only case described as blindness from birth. In this lies its special characteristic, for "since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind" (v. 32).—*Ellicott*. Congenital blindness is incurable by modern science.—*Abbott*.

BLINDNESS is specially frequent in the east. While in northern Europe there is only one blind in a thousand, in Egypt there is one in every hundred; indeed, very few persons have their eyes quite healthy.—*Geikie*. The causes are (1) the sudden changes in tem-

2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or *his* parents, that he was born blind?

3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: ¹ but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.

¹ John 11: 4.

perature and light; (2) the intense brightness of the sun, and (3) the fine dust in the air of those sandy countries.

HIS THREEFOLD AFFLICTION. (1) *He was blind.* Consider what a terrible evil blindness is; of how large a part of all that is happy and blessed in life it deprives one; how it darkens and narrows the life; how little of beauty can come in; how many avenues of learning it closes up. Mr. Ruskin says that "the greatest thing a human soul ever does in this world is to see something, and to tell what it sees in a plain way. Hundreds of people can talk for one who can think; but thousands can think for one who can see. To see clearly is poetry, prophecy, and religion all in one." If one can see,

"The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise."

(2) *He was helpless.* There was almost nothing which a blind person could do in that country. This man could neither remove his blindness nor support himself. He must be dependent on his friends, and little it was they could do for him. (3) *He was poor;* a blind beggar (v. 8) by the gate of Jerusalem. "All the roads leading to Jerusalem, like the temple itself, were much frequented, at the times of the feasts, by beggars, who reaped a special harvest from the charity of the pilgrims."—*Getkies*.

A TYPE. (1) *The sinner is blind.* "The man who is physically blind may, like John Milton in his blindness, see God and revel in the beauties of the spiritual world; but the sinner is shut out from God and heavenly things."—*R. R. Meredith*. The sinner is blind to his own best good, to the great spiritual **Moral Blindness**. realities of heaven and hell, to true holiness; to the possibilities in his soul, to the joys and glories of a religious life, to the highest motives, to eternal life. Thus spiritual blindness narrows, and restricts, and darkens the soul. (2) *He cannot cure himself.* While he can go to Jesus and be cured, he cannot cure himself; he cannot forgive his own sins, nor change his own nature, without divine aid. His first need is to have his eyes opened.

II. The False Charge Against His Character.—V. 2. And his disciples asked him, saying. This question grew out of the fact that it was the common opinion among the Jews that every trouble and misfortune was the direct result of some special sin. **Who did sin, this man, or his parents.** Blindness that began before he was born could not be the punishment of his own sin. They ask, therefore, on account of whose sin was it? Could it be his parents' sin? Or was it possible that the man had sinned in a pre-existent state? "Josephus very clearly asserts that the Pharisees, who were the most popular religious sect, believed in the pre-existence of souls."—*Sadler*.

The disciples' question brings up the old question discussed by the friends of Job. They assumed that all suffering is a punishment of sin, for how can a just God send suffering upon the good? To do so would be rank injustice. What! punish the innocent? For Job to declare that he was innocent, while suffering so bitterly, was to charge God with injustice. There is this truth in their argument, that sin always results in suffering, and that some suffering is the fruit of sin. But the belief that every affliction is the direct punishment for some special sin, and that we can judge of the moral and spiritual condition of any person by the calamities that befall him, or by the outward success and blessings that crown his days, tends to several great evils; (1) self-complacency and spiritual pride; (2) to uncharitable judgment of others, and (3) to hopelessness and despair on the part of the afflicted, instead of learning the lessons affliction is intended to teach.

III. Jesus' Answer to the Charge.—V. 3, 4. 3. Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: *i. e.*, so as to be the cause of the blindness. Our Lord does not deny the existence of sin either in this man or in his parents.—*Godet*. Nor does he deny that through sin all evil came into the world, but only that this blindness was not the punishment for any particular sin in either the man himself or his parents. The

4. I ¹ must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

¹ John 4: 34; 5: 19, 36; 11: 9; 12: 35; 17: 4.

same truth is taught in Luke 13: 1-5. Those on whom the tower of Siloam fell were not worse than others, but "except ye repent ye shall all likewise perish." But that the works of God. The *works of God* here meant are primarily his saving, redeeming works (*Stier*), including his friendly love, his watchful providence for their good, his overruling, transforming power. **Should be made manifest.** This man's blindness was the divinely ordained means of bringing him in contact with Christ. He was to receive eyesight, and with it the blessing of salvation. His bodily infirmity was one of the pre-arranged conditions of obtaining spiritual eyesight. More than this, it would furnish an opportunity for Christ to give a new proof that he is the light of the world. — *G. W. Clark*. Sufferings "are the shavings and sawdust and general disorder of the carpenter's workshop, which are necessarily thrown off in the making of the needful article. It is to it, to the finished work, we must look, and not to the shavings, *Sin and Suffering*. if we would understand the actual state of things around us." —

Expositor's Bible. "Extraordinary afflictions are not always the punishment of extraordinary sins, but sometimes the trial of extraordinary graces." — *Henry*. So when Lazarus was dying, Jesus said to his disciples, "This sickness is not unto death; but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby." His redeeming power over death, his wonderful love were shown not only to Lazarus, but to the world throughout the ages. The storm shows in the rainbow new glories and powers in the sun, that would otherwise be utterly unknown. In the darkness is shown a myriad of heavenly stars never seen in the daytime, shining with revelations of the goodness, the greatness, the omnipotence of our Heavenly Father. But for suffering how could we know the love of God? But for darkness how could we know the true light? From a pillow of stones many a one has seen the heavens opened; and from Pisgah's rocky heights, climbed in weariness and toil, has come the vision of the promised land.

The Mysteries of Providence.

COMFORTING APPLICATIONS to those who are afflicted, because the affliction does not argue special sin on their part, nor the anger of God, but has come to them that the goodness and redeeming love of God may be manifested in them.

On my bended knee
I recognize thy purpose clearly shown;
My vision thou hast dimmed, that I may see
Thyself, thyself alone.

— *Miss E. Lloyd, on Milton's Blindness.*

And when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
Soul-animating strains — alas, too few.

— *Wordsworth.*

In the first part of Job, we are allowed, through the heavenly scenes, to understand Job's affliction, though to him, at the time, these visions were unknown.

4. I (better, as in R. V., *we*) must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: *i. e.*, while the fitting opportunity lasts, as the daylight is the fitting time for our daily work. After the Passion there was no longer the opportunity for the performance of the works characteristic of the historic life of Christ. — *Cook*. The substitution of "we" for "I" lends particular force and beauty to the verse. Jesus associates his disciples with himself; like himself, they have a calling which must not be disobeyed, to work the works of God. "To rid the world of evil, of wretchedness, lonely sorrow, destitution, and disease is, if anything, the work of God; if God is doing anything he is carrying the world on towards perfection, and if the world is ever to be perfect it must be purged from agony and wretchedness, irrespective of where these come from." — *Expositor's Bible*. **The night cometh, when no man can work.** He does not except even himself from the proverbial law. The day of opportunity passes, never to return. Even Christ must do his work of redemption, and of teaching, at the time appointed, or it never could be done. He might do other works afterwards, but not those.

"There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;

Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries."

"Planting must be done in seedtime. Tending the field must be done in growing-time. Harvesting must be done when the crop is ripe. We must make hay while the sun shines. We must grind our grist while the water is flowing by the mill. We must teach the

5. As long as I am in the world,¹ I am the light of the world.

6. When he had thus spoken,² he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay,

When I am in the world, I am the light of the world.
When he had thus spoken he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, (a) and anointed his eyes

¹ John 1: 5, 9; 3: 19; 8: 12; 12: 35, 46.

² Mark 7: 33; 8: 23.

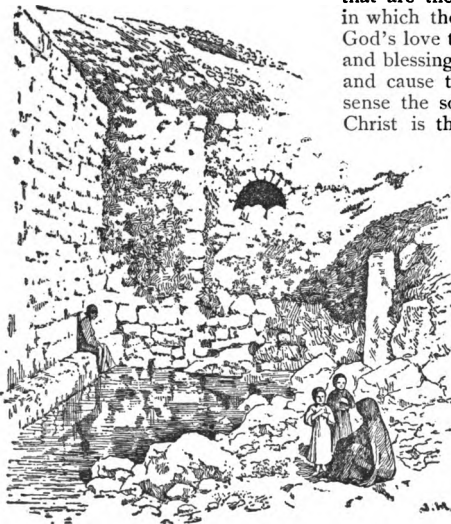
(a) Or, *and with the clay thereof anointed his eyes.*

child while he is the child. We must show love while the loved ones are still with us. We must prepare for the future while it is still to-day."—*H. C. Trumbull.*

IV. Christ the Light of the World.—V. 5. Jesus now shows what is one of the works that must be done while the day lasts. **5. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.** It was prophesied that the Messiah should open the eyes of the blind (Isa. 29; 18; 35: 5; 42: 7). The direct reference is to Christ's fulfilment of these prophecies (Luke 4: 18, 21). Whatever darkness is in the world, of that Christ is the *corresponding* light. Whether it be the darkness of sorrow, or of ignorance, or of depravity, or spiritual death, Jesus Christ sends the rays of his light to dispel the darkness, and we have but to open our eyes to see.

THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD is the sun, and the sun is a perpetual illustration of what Jesus is doing in the moral world. The rays from the sun are of three kinds, different from one another probably only as to the length of the waves of which they are composed. (1) *Light rays.* Nearly all the light we receive comes from the sun. Even the moonlight is but reflected sunlight. Even when we are in the shade, or in the house, where we cannot see the sun, the light we receive is sunlight, dispersed from the particles in the air, reflected from all things around us; even the light of our lamps and gas burners is but sunlight which has been stored up in the earth. So it is that all our spiritual light, from whatever sources it seems to come, is really from God. Our white sunlight is really composed of thousands of colors, shades, and tints, which fill the world with beauty. Such variety is in the pure light from Christ, reflected from our manifold natures, needs, and circumstances. The light drives away darkness, shows the way, makes clear heaven, goodness, God, the future; it fills the world with beauty and glory. (2) *Heat rays.* Nearly all the heat in the world comes directly or indirectly from the sun. The fires that warm us and that are the source of power are from the wood or coal in which the heat of the sun has been stored. Such is God's love to us in Jesus Christ, bringing cheer, warmth, and blessing. (3) *Chemical rays,* which act upon plants, and cause the movements of life. These rays are in a sense the source of life, the instrumentality of life. So Christ is the source of our spiritual life. Light, love, and life all come from him, as the bringer of light and truth from the Father of lights.

Light. Three Kinds of Rays.



Pool of Siloam.

V. An Example and Illustration: Opening the Eyes of the Blind.

—Vs. 6, 7. Jesus now illustrates this great truth by an enacted PARABLE OF REDEMPTION,—a miracle on the blind man, which is a sign, and proof, and parable of his word of enlightening the world.

6. He spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle. If we ask why Jesus used these means, we can see at least some probable reasons. (1) The means connected the cure with Jesus himself. Hence he often touched in some way those he healed. It was not mere bodily healing, but a knowledge of and drawing to the personal Saviour that men most needed. (2) It aided and developed

7. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

8. The neighbours therefore, and they which before had seen him that he was blind, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is by interpretation, Sent). He went away therefore, and washed, and came seeing.

The neighbours therefore, and they which saw him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged?

the faith of the blind man. "He could feel, though he could not see. So the Lord put clay on the eye-socket, awaking wonder, hope, expectation; and such was the ladder put down for his faith to climb up into the light."—*F. B. Meyer, B. A.* (3) It is plain that it was not from any power in the means itself, as can be proved by a thousand experiments. The means were simple, in order to avoid all danger of trust in them instead of the Light of the world.

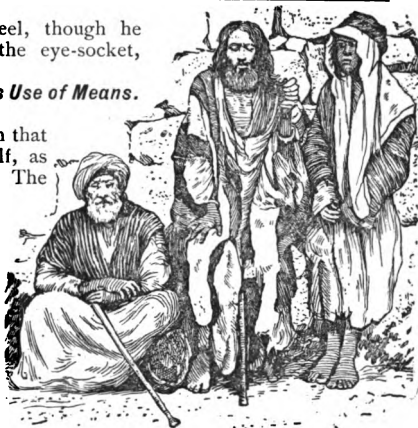
7. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam; i. e., wash off the clay that has been put upon your eyes. This was a test of his faith and obedience, and also a means of increasing them. The small spark was fanned into a flame. One of the best things for an inquirer is to give him something to do. All the time, as he groped his way to the pool, he would be thinking on this man of promise and of power.

THE POOL OF SILOAM is situated on the southeast of Jerusalem. It is "a small, deep reservoir in the mouth of the Tyropæon, into which the water flows from a smaller basin excavated in the solid rock a few feet higher up; and then the stream is led off along the base of the steep, rocky point of Ophel, to irrigate the terraces and gardens extending into the Valley of Jehoshaphat below. The reservoir is fifty-three feet long, eighteen feet broad, and nineteen feet deep."—*Robinson's Researches.* Which is by interpretation, Sent. Or sending, i. e., outlet of waters. The pool, by its very name, was a symbol of him who was sent into the world to work the works of God (v. 4), and who gives light to the world by providing a fountain in which not only all uncleanness is washed away, but all ignorance and blindness of heart.—*Abbott.* He went his way. He believed, he obeyed, and it was done unto him according to his faith. And came seeing. Came, not back to Christ, who had probably gone away meanwhile (v. 12), but to his own home, as would appear from what follows. A new world was created for him, more marvellous than his loftiest dreams.

FAITH TESTED. It is noticeable that Christ never cured without giving the healed something to do, as a test of his faith and obedience. When he was asked to heal, the simple request served as an indication of faith; when, as here, he volunteered the cure, he seems always to have required some act as an evidence of faith.—*Abbott.*

THE USE OF MEANS. (1) We should never despise means, even in works where all the power is divine, as in works of healing, of conversion, and of revivals, like that of Pentecost. (2) Even while we use means we should not depend on them, but on the Lord who made the means, and is the source of the power that flows through them.

VI. Investigation into the Facts.—Vs. 8-11. FIRST. BY THE NEIGHBORS. 8. The neighbours, etc. These would be the ones to recognize the man in his changed condition, and to report the marvellous change in him. That he was blind. The best critical authorities read as in the R. V., that he was a beggar. He now abandoned that occupation, and this circumstance first attracted notice. The reason of it was readily learned: he had received sight. Hence their first question, Is not this he that sat and begged? implying what he was accustomed to do. It is the change in his conduct that is first observed. And this is what the world usually notices first in those to whom spiritual eyesight is given. And such a change occasions debate, as in this case.—*G. W. Clark.*



Beggars by the Roadside.

9. Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am *he*.

10. Therefore said they unto him, How were thine eyes opened?

11. He answered and said, A man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight.

Others said, It is he: 9 others said, No, but he is like him. He said, I am *he*.

They said therefore unto 10 him, How then were thine eyes opened?

He answered, The man 11 *th*a is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash: so I went away and washed, and I received sight.

9. **He is like him.** They would not believe that such a miracle had been wrought, and therefore argued that they must have been misled by a striking resemblance. So men who do not wish to believe in the reality of their friends' conversion find some way to explain the change they see. "The opening of the eyes would naturally change the whole countenance." If we are truly changed by grace, our friends and neighbors will remark the difference in us. — *Jacobus*. **I am he.** This settled the question of fact, but still they could not conceive how the change could take place, and therefore asked (v. 10), **How were thine eyes opened?**

11. **A man.** R. V. has *the* man, implying some small knowledge of Jesus.

SECOND. BY THE RULERS, in a *semi-official manner* (vs. 14-34). The neighbors, finding the facts assured, but involved in mystery, bring the man to the Pharisees, who make an examination (1) of the man himself; (2) of his parents; (3) then again of the man himself in a kind of cross-examination.

THEIR ARGUMENT was (1) an attempt to discredit the facts; (2) to prove that the cure was impossible, because Jesus broke the Sabbath in doing it, and therefore was not a good man. (3) They enforced their argument by threats of excommunication against all who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah.

THE RESULTS were (1) that the fact was established beyond a doubt. (2) The necessary inference was that Jesus was from God, and therefore the Messiah he claimed to be. (3) But the man himself was excommunicated.

I know not what this man may be,
Sinner or saint; but as for me,

One thing I know, that I am he
That once was blind, and now I see.

— *John Hay*.

FACTS are the unanswerable argument in favor of Christianity. The lives made better; the souls changed from evil to good; the moral effects of revivals; the changes which Christianity has wrought in the world, the map of the world to-day, showing everywhere the superiority of Christian nations, — these are arguments which infidelity cannot answer.

THE BLIND MAN BECOMES A DISCIPLE, as we learn from succeeding verses. He had met Jesus, but had not seen him as yet, but all the argument and investigation had gradually been working faith in him, and preparing him to accept the truth in Jesus, and to trust all to him. He had already suffered much for defending his unknown benefactor. At length Jesus finds the man, the eyes of his soul are opened, and he becomes a disciple.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Meyer's *The Life and Light of Men*, an exposition of John 1:12 (\$1.00, the Revell Co). The various works on *The Miracles of Christ*. On blindness, see Sir Risdon Bennett's *Diseases of the Bible*; Palgrave's *Eastern Arabia*, II. 34; Calmet, p. 195; Bush's *Illustrations of Scripture*, p. 597. Geikie, Edersheim, Farrar, and Hanna, on *The Life of Christ*. Thompson's *Seeds and Sheaves*, p. 210; Milton's poem on his blindness; Longfellow's poem on Blind Bartimeus; *Sermons* by Romeyn on "Christ the Light of the World"; and by Frederick Brooks on "The Power of a Fact." Whittier's *Legend of St. Mark* in his poems. Poems on blindness in *Foster's Cyclopædia*, Poetical, Second Series 3192-3194, and First Series 265-270.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. THE DARKNESS. (1) Blindness of the body, — an example of the darkness of sorrow and trouble abounding in the world. (2) Mental blindness, — ignorance, low ideals, narrow outlook, failure to know what is wisest and best for this life. (3) Moral

blindness, — ignorance of God, of righteousness, of heaven, of the possibilities of the soul, of highest hopes and joys, of true life.

2. **JESUS THE LIGHT.** (1) To the body, (2) to the mind, (3) to the spirit. He reveals truth, joy, heaven, hope, righteousness. He gives life, which is the light of men. "There is no object so foul that intense light will not make it beautiful." "Light is God's eldest daughter." He is "an ocean of Light over an ocean of darkness."

3. **OUR PART.** (1) We must receive the light by faith. Much of the discipline of Providence is to lead us to believe. (2) We must use the means. God is the author of the means as really as he is of faith. To use the appointed means is a mark of faith. The blind man when he went to the pool of Siloam and washed was cured by faith as really as if no means had been used, and Jesus had cured him by a word only. (3) We must reflect the light which Jesus has brought into the world. (4) We must do each work in its time. There is a "too late" even for good deeds.

4. **THE CONFLICT OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS.** (1) The best of deeds can be misinterpreted and called evil. (2) It is one thing to break over human rules and standards, another to disobey the Word of God. (3) The fruits are the test whether we are sent of God.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES, and the connection with the last lesson.

SUBJECT: JESUS THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD.

Exemplified and illustrated by this lesson. The miracle described is another of Jesus' *Parables of Redemption*.

I. THE BLIND MAN. THE NEED OF LIGHT (vs. 1-3).

PICTURE the situation of the blind man; a poor beggar, helpless, deprived of much good, and yet surrounded with light and blessings unspeakable.

A TYPE of those who are spiritually blind.

Illustration. Dante's visit to the regions of the dead, and the contrast as he rose from the darkness, where

"On our view the beautiful hills of heaven
Dawned through a circular opening in the cave;
Thence issuing, we again beheld the stars."

Illustration. Sir James Wylie, late physician to the Emperor of Russia, attentively studied the effects of light as a curative agent in the hospital of St. Petersburg, and he discovered that the number of patients who were cured in rooms properly lighted was four times that of those confined in dark rooms. — *H. L. Hastings*. Not long ago a young man's eyes became diseased, and he was compelled to sit in a perfectly dark room for several months, and it nearly killed him. His life was saved by his being led out into the sunlight, with his eyes tightly bandaged.

Illustration. We know that light is life-generating and health-sustaining; that without it man becomes blighted, even as the parched grass of the field. Take away the light, and both serenity of mind and strength of body are gone. The very tissues of the body degenerate in utter darkness. Take away the light, and the body becomes blanched, etiolated, and wasted. Go to the colliery or the dungeon, and you go to the limbo of ghosts; not ruddy, healthy men and women. I need not refer to the catalogue of diseases belonging to darkness.

LIGHT ENOUGH in the world, only men are blind and do not use it.

II. THE CURE OF THE BLIND MAN. THE COMING OF THE LIGHT (vs. 4-7).

Illustration. JESUS THE SUN, THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. "Every tree, plant, and flower grows and flourishes by the grace and bounty of the sun. Leaving out of account the eruptions of volcanoes and the ebb and flow of the tides, every mechanical action on the earth's surface, every manifestation of power, organic and inorganic, vital and physical, is produced by the sun. Every fire that burns, and every flame that glows, dispenses light and heat which originally belonged to the sun. The sun digs the ore from our mines, he rolls the iron, he rivets the plates, he boils the water, he draws the train. Thunder and lightning are also his transmuted strength. And remember this is not poetry, but rigid, mechanical truth. — *Prof. Tyndall*.

Illustration. Aristotle, in one of his works, fancies the feelings of one who, having lived in darkness all his life, should for the first time behold the rising of the sun. He might have had some idea of the world from the light of candles or of moon and stars; but

when the sun rose, what new glories would burst on his vision! How much more beautiful, more perfect, far-reaching than he could have conceived! The dangers, too, would be shown in clearer light, as well as the safe roads. Like this was the coming of Christ to the world, "*a dayspring from on high.*" Like this is the receiving of Christ into our souls.

Illustration. CHRIST THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD. "I have seen a picture that I used at one time to think a good deal of, but now that I have come to look at it more closely I would not put it in my house except I turned the face of it to the wall. It represents Christ standing at a door knocking, and having a big lantern in his hand. Why, you might as well hang up a lantern to the sun as put one into Christ's hand. He is the Sun of Righteousness, and it is our privilege to walk in the light of an unclouded sun."—*D. L. Moody.*

III. THE INVESTIGATION. FAITH CONFIRMED (vs. 8-11).

Illustration. The wires of the telegraph and the instruments of the office are essential means for sending messages, but they have no power in themselves. They are means through which the power flows.

Illustration. The Bartholdi Statue of Liberty enlightening the world. It is the gospel which enlightens the world, and, placed on the church for a pedestal, holds up Jesus to let all on the stormy sea of life see the light of the world and safely reach the desired haven.

LESSON IX.—MARCH 3.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.—JOHN 11: 30-45.

Golden Text.—*I am the resurrection and the life.*—**CLOSING MINISTRY.**
JOHN 11: 25.

THE SECTION includes John 11: 1-54.

*The Last Three Months.
Bethany, A. D. 30.*

TIME.—January to February, A. D. 30. Three months after our last lesson.

Climax of Miracles.

PLACE.—Jesus was in Perea at Bethany (or Bethabara), beyond Jordan (John 10: 40), when he received the message that Lazarus was sick. Lazarus' home was in Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem.

THE INTERVENING HISTORY is recorded in Luke 9: 51 to 17: 10, and in John 10: 1-42. Soon after the last lesson Jesus returned for a time to Galilee, and at the close of the month made his final departure from Galilee. Most of his ministry from this time was in Perea, beyond Jordan, and in the vicinity of Jerusalem. He was at the feast of dedication at Jerusalem in December. At times he wrought miracles. He uttered several discourses, including the parables of the foolish rich man, the lost sheep, and the Prodigal Son.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Family that Jesus Loved.—At Bethany, on the Mount of Olives, about two miles southeast of Jerusalem, lived a family of three,—a brother and two sisters,—with whom Jesus made his home when in that region. The family seems to have been in prosperous circumstances, as we judge from their owning their home, from the costliness of the ointment (equal to over \$400 in our day) which Mary used upon Jesus, and the number of the Jews who came to console the sisters on the death of their brother. Martha was apparently at the head of the household, and was an active, energetic woman, while Mary was more reflective and affectionate. For notices of the family see Luke 10: 38-42, John 12: 1-8. As Jesus loved John most among the disciples, so this family was closest to his heart of all the families on earth. "This is one of the places which tell us how truly Jesus is our brother. The boundless love which dwells in the infinite God does not overwhelm or supersede the distinguishing affection of the human friend."—*Sadler.*

JESUS IN THE HOME. There are many whose presence in our homes is a perpetual benediction and inspiration. Especially is this true of Jesus, with his teaching, his example, his sympathy, his love, his counsel. We can have Jesus in our hearts and homes, if we invite and welcome him, put away all that is distasteful and opposed to him, cherish all

that he loves, listen to his words, obey him, love him with all our hearts. What a change his presence would make in some families.

II. Sickness in the Family.

—Lazarus, the brother, was taken dangerously sick while Jesus was at Bethabara, beyond Jordan, twenty-eight or thirty miles away.

SENDING FOR JESUS. The first thought of the sisters, when all common means failed, was to send a message to Jesus that his friend was sick. No request was made. The message was itself a prayer. When we or our loved ones are sick, we should go to Jesus with our trouble; not to the neglect of means, for whatever helps and cures is the gift of God's love, but for his guidance, and help, and blessing.

III. The Death and Burial of Lazarus. — Soon after the messenger had gone, Lazarus died, and, as usual, was buried the same day. (See Acts 5: 6.) Hope was gone from the sisters. Friends came to the house to condole with them in their affliction. Yet Jesus delayed two days before he set out to aid and comfort his friends, — a delay full of mystery, and yet for the glory of God, and the blessing of the afflicted ones.

THE MYSTERIOUS DELAY. (1) This delay was necessary to complete the work in which Jesus was engaged, and from which he would not suffer himself to be drawn away even by considerations of personal sympathy. — *Abbott.* (2) This delay was necessary to the consummation of the miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus in such form as to forever prohibit the impression that death had not really taken place. — *Abbott.* And (3) to develop and increase the faith and love of the Bethany family and his disciples, and give them a vision of the future life and their Saviour's power. (4) Jesus himself was soon to lie three days in the grave; if, therefore, he was able to raise up Lazarus after four days' burial, they would have stronger faith in the resurrection of Jesus from his three days' burial.

ILLUSTRATION. There is a common pastime, in which the letters of some word, each on a separate card, are thrown together promiscuously, and given to us to discover the word they form when rightly arranged. The events of daily life are like these letters, only the discovery of the meaning is rendered doubly difficult by our being able to see but one at a time. But God knows how to arrange them, and to bring them together in the order by which they will spell out the best possible good to us.

ILLUSTRATION. "The Delayed Blessings Office," in the tract *Expectation Corner.*

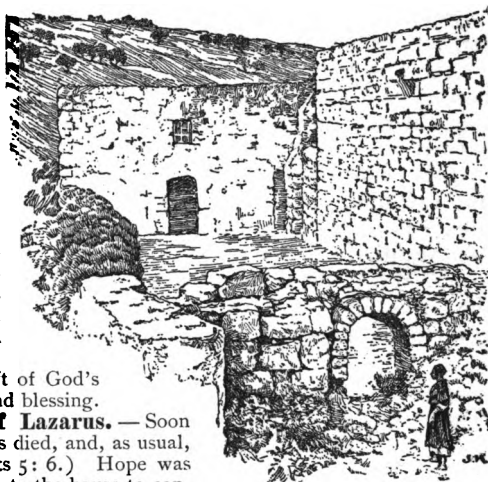
THE CHRISTIAN'S DEATH, A SLEEP. Jesus taught his disciples a lesson about death, by comparing it to sleep. Because (1) in both, the person is unconscious of the worldly activities around him. (2) The soul continues to live, while the body is unconscious. (3) There is to be an awakening to new and fresh life. The very expression implies immortality.

IV. The Arrival of Jesus at Bethany, and the Meeting with Martha. — Four days after the death of Lazarus Jesus arrived at Bethany. The active, business-like Martha heard of his arrival, and, without notifying her more quiet sister, went to meet Jesus, just outside the village. She greeted him with those words of sorrowful despair, "Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died." But even then there was a dawn of hope in her heart from her experience of the power of Jesus. Jesus replied with the assurance that he was "the resurrection and the life," and prepared her for the great work he was about to do.

V. Jesus Sends for Mary. — Vs. 30-32. When Martha's faith and hope were assured, Jesus bids her go home and bring her sister, with the message, "The Master is come, and calleth for thee."

THE MASTER'S CALL. 1. He is our rightful master and teacher, and therefore has a right to call us.

2. He calls us (1) by his noble, loving character; (2) by his words; (3) by kind acts



House of Mary and Martha.

30. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him.

31. The ¹ Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there.

32. Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, ² Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

33. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled,

(Now Jesus was not yet ³⁰ come into the village, but was still in the place where Martha met him.)

The Jews then which were ³¹ with her in the house, and were comforting her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing that she was going unto the tomb to (a) weep there.

Mary therefore, when she ³² came where Jesus was, and saw him, fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.

When Jesus therefore saw ³³ her (b) weeping, and the Jews also (b) weeping which came with her, he (c) groaned in the spirit, and (d) was troubled, and said,

¹ John 11: 19.

² John 11: 21.

(a) Gr., *weil*.

(b) Gr., *wailing*.

(c) Or, *was moved with indignation in the spirit*.

(d) Gr., *troubled himself*.

towards us; (4) by his Holy Spirit; (5) by holding out the supplies for all our wants; (6) by the invitations and exhortations of friends; (7) by Sabbaths and religious services; (8) by his providences; (9) by afflictions; (10) by our consciences.

3. He calls us (1) to himself and God; (2) to the resurrection of life; (3) to higher and better lives; (4) to the satisfaction of all our needs; (5) to usefulness, to work for our fellowmen; (6) to heaven, to joy, to love, to every good.

30. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town. Jesus seems to have avoided going to the house (1) because so many Jews were there (v. 19) that he could not say what he desired to the afflicted sisters. His work of comfort and instruction could *best be done* with them alone, especially if some of their friends were opposed to his teachings. (2) They might report his coming to the Pharisees, who would interfere with his plans. (3) It is quite possible that the conventional mourning customs were distasteful to him. Moreover, he did not come to join in funeral lamentations, but to take away the need of them.

31. The Jews then which were with her in the house to condole with the sisters and comfort them with their sympathy. "In such cases the belief is that of the maidens in Tennyson's 'Princess': 'She must weep, or she will die.' Then are brought women skilled in singing sad songs and extemporizing moving couplets in praise of the departed, thus, if possible, to open the fountain of tears."—*Rev. William Ewing*. She goeth unto the grave to weep* there. The custom still remains. "For many months the females of the household will go at times to the grave of father, brother, or husband, to weep there, and are joined by relatives and friends."—*William Ewing*.

* *ἵνα κλαύσῃ*
to wail aloud.
(contrast v. 35.)

32. Then Mary . . . fell down at his feet. Not so Martha (v. 21). Mary's feelings were of an intenser and stronger kind (*Meyer*), or she was more given to expression. She uttered the same words as Martha had done. "They were doubtless an oft-repeated refrain . . . on the subject of their sorrow."—*Meyer*. The conversation with Martha was not repeated, because Mary's faith was more prepared for the work of resurrection; or if it was repeated, the evangelist does not need to repeat it.

VI. They all go to the Tomb.—Vs. 33-38. 33. He groaned in the spirit. The word translated "groaned" expresses not sorrow, but indignation.—*Cambridge Bible*. Jesus was deeply agitated in his soul with indignant emotions, probably in view of the power of sin producing disease and death, an example of which was before him. "He felt all that sin had wrought. He beheld the wages of sin."—*Trench*. Jesus saw before him not only Mary, but some of his implacable foes, who would only be hardened and infuriated by the miracle he was about to perform. And these self-righteous men were now weeping and groaning in professional sorrow with Mary! Men who would soon be plotting to kill, not only Jesus, but the restored Lazarus (12: 10). No wonder the spirit of the Holy One was hot within him.—*American Commentary*. And was troubled. The margin is better; *He troubled himself*, i. e., agitated himself, allowed his emotion to become evident by external movement, such as a shudder.

34. And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see.

35. Jesus ¹ wept.

36. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him!

37. And some of them said, Could not this man,² which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?

Where have ye laid him? 34
They say unto him, Lord,
come and see.

Jesus wept. 35
The Jews therefore said, 36
Behold how he loved him!
But some of them said, 37
Could not this man, which
opened the eyes of him that
was blind, have caused that
this man also should not die?

¹ Luke 19: 41.

² John 9: 6.

34. And said, Where have ye laid him? Asked of the sisters, as a natural and courteous way of inviting them to lead the way to the tomb.

35. Jesus wept.* Shed tears, wept silently, an entirely different word from the "weep" and "weeping" of verses 31, 33. It is well that this short sentence should be in a verse by itself, the shortest verse in the Bible, but one of the most blessed.

* ἐδάκρυσεν, *shed tears, wept silently.*

JESUS WEPT. This fact suggests (1) the loving, sympathetic tenderness of Jesus' character. We saw him bright and happy at the wedding in Cana; now we see him pained and tearful at the burial in Bethany. He is our brother-man; he wept with those who were in tears, just as he rejoiced with those who were in smiles before. — *C. S. Robinson*. The same Saviour wept over Jerusalem, in sympathy with poor dying sinners, who were wasting their opportunities, and with right hand and left casting away the gift of God. (2) This act expresses the heart of God. We cannot conceive how the Eternal and Unchangeable can express his sympathy with us, except through his Son. "When, then, our Saviour weeps from sympathy at Mary's tears, let us not say it is the love of a man overcome by natural feeling. It is the love of God, the bowels of compassion of the Almighty and Eternal, condescending to appear as we are capable of receiving it, in the form of human nature." — *J. H. Newman, Ser. X., 3d vol.* "The very gospel in which the deity of Jesus is most clearly asserted is also that which makes us best acquainted with the profoundly human side of his life." — *Godet*. (3) That the most tender, personal friendship is not inconsistent with the most pure religion. Piety makes more tender the emotions of love. (4) It is right, it is indispensable, for the Christian to sympathize with others in their afflictions. (5) Sorrow at the death of friends is right. It is right to weep. All that religion does in that case is to *temper* and chasten our grief, to teach us to mourn with submission to God, to weep without murmuring. (6) The action of Jesus on this occasion, and on others, shows that the working of these greater miracles brought an intense strain on his physical system. It was a part of his vicarious bearing of our infirmities. The good that he did was at a real cost to himself.

A CONTRAST with the pagan ideal of deity. "Homer's gods weep and bellow when wounded, but are not touched with the feeling of human infirmity." Mr. Gladstone observes: "No Homeric deity will ever be found to make a personal sacrifice on behalf of a human client." So Diana, when appealed to by the wretched Hyppolytus for sympathy, replies, "I see thy love, but must not shed a tear." See *Iliad XXI. 379, 380; 461-467; XXIV. 525.* — *M. R. Vincent.*

36. Then, * ἐφίλει, *not the word in verse 5 ἡγάπα the love of friendship.* Behold how he * loved him.

37. Could not this man, etc. The miracle of the blind man was referred to because it was of



Bethany and the Road to Jericho.

38. Jesus therefore again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest¹ see the glory of God?

41. Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me:

42. And I knew that thou hearest me always: but² because of the people which stand by, I said *it*, that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

Jesus therefore again 38
(e) groaning in himself cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it.

Jesus saith, Take ye away 39
the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.

Jesus saith unto her, Said 40
I not unto thee, that, if thou believest, thou shouldest see the glory of God?

So they took away the 41
stone. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me.

And I knew that thou hear- 42
est me always: but because of the multitude which standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me.

¹ John 11: 4, 23.

² John 12: 30.

(e) Or, *being moved with indignation in himself.*

(f) Or, *upon.*

recent occurrence, and in the immediate neighborhood, while the two previous miracles of raising the dead (Luke 7: 11-17; 8: 41-56) were performed in distant Galilee, about a year and a half before.

38. **Cometh to the grave. It was a cave.** The numerous sepulchres which skirt the valleys on the north, east, and south of Jerusalem exhibit for the most part one general mode of construction. A doorway in the perpendicular face of the rock, usually small and without ornament, leads to one or more small chambers excavated from the rock, and commonly upon the same level with the door. Very rarely are the chambers lower than the door.—*Robinson's Researches.* **And a stone lay upon it.** Better as R. V., *against it*, as a safe door.

"I KNOW THAT HE SHALL RISE AGAIN."—"It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it." There is not a glen, not a hillside in Palestine which does not to this day bear its silent testimony to the faith of the Jews of olden time in the resurrection of the body. Not even the Egyptians could surpass them in their reverence for the remains of the dead.—*Canon Tristram.*

VII. **Lazarus Raised from the Dead.**—Vs. 39-45. 39. **Martha . . . saith unto him.** It was merely Martha's opinion, from what generally happened under like circumstances, that decay had already commenced. Nothing can be known as to the fact. But, it is asked, had not Lazarus been embalmed? Undoubtedly he had, but after the manner of the Jews, who limited themselves to wrapping the body in perfumes (see John 19: 40), a process which could not prevent corruption.—*Godet.* **For he hath been dead four days.** "Dead" is in italics, and is supplied. It may be equally right to supply "buried," or "there." Probably Martha pointed to the tomb when she spoke, the gesture taking the place of the word.

40. **Said I not unto thee?** He had doubtless repeated to Martha what he had said to his disciples (v. 4). **If thou wouldest believe,** trust in the goodness, and power, and promises of Jesus, not in any definite work to be accomplished. For he has not told just what he would do. Such must be our faith. But her faith was necessary to the blessing. **See the glory of God.** They would see a work of God which would manifest his power and love to men, which would exalt his Son as the Messiah, and bring divine blessings to the family, to his disciples, and to the world.

41. **Jesus lifted up his eyes.** A natural, simple, but expressive act of worship. The natural forms of worship are an aid to worship, both for ourselves and those who are with us. **And said, Father, I thank thee.** Is not the address recorded in these verses simply a *thanksgiving* spoken in respect *The Prayer of Jesus.* of a previously offered *private prayer*? "All his miracles were wrought in absolute concurrence with the Father. In them the Son glorified the Father, and the Father glorified the Son."—*American Commentary.*

42. **And I knew that thou hearest me always.** He was never denied, for he

43. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

44. And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes: and ¹ his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.

He that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with (g) grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.

¹ John 20: 7.

(g) Or, *grave-bands*.

always prayed in the right spirit, with the right motives, and with perfect faith. The prayer was answered both when he seemed to be denied (as when he prayed in Gethsemane that the cup might pass from him), and when the request was visibly granted, as here. So it is with us; our true prayers are always answered, even when God denies our particular request. Even then he always grants the spirit of it, and gives us what, if we saw all the circumstances and results, we would have asked for. **Because of the people which stand by, I said it.** So that they would know that his power was from God, and recognize his relation to God. **That they may believe that thou hast sent me.** Not merely that they might believe intellectually that he was a messenger or representative sent by the Father, but that their thoughts might be turned from him, who was but the instrument, the voice of God, to the invisible Father himself, who spoke in him and wrought through him. — *Abbott*.



Tomb of Lazarus.

43. **He cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth.** As one would speak loud to awaken a sleeper. The loud voice with which he spoke was the expression of a decided will, sure of being obeyed. Undoubtedly these external signs were only, as Hengstenberg says, for the individuals present, the power of raising the dead dwelling, not in the voice, but in the will of Jesus expressed thereby. — *Godet*. "In this raising of Lazarus there was a threefold miracle: there was the reversal of the corruption of the body, so that it should come forth in health and soundness; there was **Lazarus Raised.** the restoration of the animal life, by which the heart beat, and the blood again coursed through the veins; and there was, above all, the summoning of the spirit from the receptacle of spirits, and re-embodiment of it and enthroning it again in the secret place from which it rules the whole frame." — *Sadler*.

44. **And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with grave clothes.** It was the Jewish custom to wrap the dead comparatively loosely in a winding sheet or shroud, which would have impeded, though not prevented, arising and walking. — *Abbott*. The expression, *he came forth*, does not necessarily indicate that he walked, especially if the sepulchre were dug vertically, but simply that he arose, which he could easily do, notwithstanding the linen cloths in which he was enveloped. — *Godet*. **Loose him, and let him go.** Christ gives them something to do. This is partly to recall them from their speechless and dazed astonishment, partly to prevent the too great and dangerous revulsion of feeling, partly because he has done his work and would bid them to do what in them lies to be sharers with him in the restoration of the loved one to life and liberty. In this is a moral significance; we cannot raise the spiritually dead; but we can bring Christ to their grave by our prayers, and we can aid in their perfect liberation when the divine voice has called them from their sleep of death. — *Abbott*.

Health's crimson light o'erspread his face,
His eye was fire, his step was grace;
No trace of what it was before
The metamorphosed body wore.

— *Berguer*.

45. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary¹ and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.

Many therefore of the 45 Jews, who came to Mary and beheld (4) that which he did, believed on him.

¹ John 2: 23; 10: 42; 12: 11, 18.

(4) Many ancient authorities read, *the things which he did*.

THE EFFECT. 45. Many of the Jews . . . believed on him. They were convinced the miracle was a fact. Being a fact, it proved the divine power of Jesus who wrought the miracle. It was the attestation of his mission, as the Son of God, the exemplar, the teacher, the Saviour of the world.

LEGENDS CONCERNING LAZARUS. "He lived for thirty years after his resurrection, and died at the age of sixty (*Epiphan. Har., I., p. 652*). When he came forth from the tomb, it was with the bloom and fragrance as of a bridegroom (*Philo Cod. Apoc., N. S., p. 805*). He and his sisters, with Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and other disciples, were sent out to sea by the Jews in a leaky boat, but miraculously escaped destruction, and were brought safely to Marseilles. There he preached the gospel, and founded a church, and became its bishop. After many years he suffered martyrdom."

HELPFUL THOUGHTS.

1. The true home is one where Jesus is one of the family, and where he loves to abide.
2. We may make our home such (1) by casting out every word and thought that would be unpleasant to him; (2) by cultivating those qualities and actions which are congenial to him, so that he will feel at home; (3) by loving him; (4) by inviting him to come.
3. When sickness comes, go to Jesus for help, while you use every means of health.
4. The mysterious delays of God are simply a part of his plan to bring higher good, and this will be especially manifested (v. 15) in larger faith, in clearer views of God, in a better preparation for the work before us.
5. It is useless to indulge in vain regrets over the past.

Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, It might have been!

Ah, well! for us all some sweet hope lies
Deeply buried from human eyes,

And in the hereafter, angels may
Roll the stone from its grave away.

— Whittier.

6. The Master is come and calleth for THEE.
7. The ravages of sin are enough to stir every righteous soul to indignation.
8. Jesus is full of sympathy with all our sorrows.
9. To those who are dead in sin, Jesus calls, Come forth; but there is something for them to do, — to obey and come.
10. When they come into the new life, they are often bound with the grave-clothes of former habits, of prejudice, of ignorance of spiritual truths.
11. One of our duties is to "loose them and let them go."

COMFORTS AND BLESSINGS FROM JESUS AS THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE. 1. We have the assurance that there is immortal life. Death does not end all. Lazarus could not have been brought back to life had his soul gone out like an extinguished flame.

ILLUSTRATION. The fact of the separate existence of the soul from the body may be illustrated by a watch, whose works are separate from the case and will keep going when removed from it. Joseph Cook illustrates the same fact by a rower and his boat.

2. Only eternal life begun here gives any hope of eternal life beyond the grave.
3. We shall be the same persons there as here, only changed; our bodies renewed, transformed, as a seed is transformed into a flower; so that we shall know our friends, and they us, in the better world.

4. The change will bring new powers, new developments, new sources of life and joy, as much beyond our present life as the life of a flower in the air and sunlight is above the life of the seed in the ground.

5. The resurrection is victory over death's terrors, — the agonies of separation from those we love, the dread of annihilation, of our lives being like the flame of a candle that death blows out, the destruction of our hopes and labors.

6. Jesus is the moral resurrection from the death of worldliness and sin to spiritual life.

THROUGH LAZARUS' GLASSES. Robert Browning, in his poem "An Epistle," supposed to have been written by an Arab physician who was visiting Palestine while Lazarus was still alive, describes the way Lazarus looked at this life after he had returned from his four

days' dwelling in heaven. Earthly cares and hopes were so small and dim in that light. "How many cares and worries would disappear if viewed through Lazarus' glasses!" "On the other hand, through these same wonderful glasses, how important and weighty is any seemingly slight occurrence if it plants the seed of vice or virtue in any human heart." "We ought to test each event of life through these glasses." "Does it affect merely my material circumstances, or has it an influence on my character, my spiritual self, or on my friend's character, my friend's soul?" See article in *Congregationalist* for Nov. 2, 1893, "Through Lazarus' Glasses."

A PARABLE OF REDEMPTION. (1) Sinners are dead in sin; alive to this world, but dead to heaven, to eternal goodness, to the love of God, to the great spiritual realities. Augustine compares the three forms of death from which our Lord restored (a) Jairus' daughter (just dead), (b) the widow's son (on his way to the tomb), and (c) Lazarus (four days buried), and deduces from the comparison how the Lord raises from spiritual death three classes of sinners. (2) The one great need of those dead in sin is new life, the spiritual life, the heavenly life, something imparted to them, for nothing dead can create life in itself. This is the new birth commanded in John 3: 3, 5. (3) Jesus Christ is the one source of this new life. Indeed, he is the fountain and source of all life, animal, vegetable, intellectual, spiritual, eternal (Col. 1: 17; John 10: 10).

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Edersheim's *Jewish Social Life*; Thomson's *The Land and the Book*, 101-108; W. Adams' *The Conversations of Christ*, "Martha the Mourner"; W. Arnot's *Anchor of the Soul*, "Lazarus is Dead"; R. S. Candlish's *Scripture Characters*, "Different Kinds of Grief, and Our Lord's Way of Dealing with it"; Winslow's *Sympathy of Christ*, "The Tears of Jesus"; N. Adams' *Christ a Friend*, "Behold How He Loved Him." *Sermons* by Moody, on verse 39; by Payson, on verse 35; by Massillon, on verse 34. *Foster's Cyclopaedia of Poet. Illus.* XI., 3683-3688.

Tennyson's *In Memoriam*, XXXI., expresses one view of Lazarus' feelings after he was raised, and Browning's "An Epistle" gives another view. This latter is well illustrated in the *Congregationalist* for Nov. 2, 1893, in an article "Through Lazarus' Glasses."

The Tract *Expectation Corner*, "The Delayed Blessings Office," gives a good illustration of the possible reasons for Christ's delay in answering the sisters' message.

LESSON X. — MARCH 10.

THE RICH YOUNG RULER. — MARK 10: 17-27.

Golden Text.—*Seek ye first the kingdom of God.* — **CLOSING MINISTRY.**

MATT. 6: 33.

THE SECTION OF HISTORY includes verses 17-

Perea.

31, and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS Matthew 19: 16-30; Luke 18: 18-30.

TIME.—March, A. D. 30. A few weeks after our last lesson.

PLACE.—On Christ's last journey to Jerusalem from the village of Ephraim, along the borders of Samaria and Galilee, and down the Jordan valley to Jericho. Probably in Perea, beyond Jordan. He had not yet reached Jericho.

JESUS.—33 years old and two or three months. About a month before his crucifixion.

THE INTERVENING STORY.—The excitement produced by the miracle of raising Lazarus inflamed the hostility of the Jewish leaders to such a degree that Jesus could not safely remain near Jerusalem (John 11: 47-54). Accordingly he went into retirement for a time at Ephraim in the mountainous region on the northern borders of Judea. After a few weeks he journeyed along the borders of Samaria and Galilee to the Jordan; crossed over the river into Perea, where he healed ten lepers (Luke 17: 12-19), discoursed concerning the Kingdom of God (Luke 17: 20-37), spoke some parables on prayer (Luke 18: 1-14), and welcomed the children, taking them in his arms (Luke 18: 15-17; Mark 10: 13-16). As he was going away from this scene the young ruler came to him.

17. And ¹ when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

18. And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? *there is none good but one, that is, God.*

And as he was going forth ¹⁷
(a) into the way, there ran
one to him and kneeled to
him, and asked him, Good
(b) Master, what shall I do
that I may inherit eternal
life?

And Jesus said unto him, ¹⁸
Why callest thou me good?
none is good save one, *even*
God.

¹ Matt. 19: 16. Luke 18: 18.

(a) Or, *on his way.*

(b) Or, *Teacher.*

EXPLANATORY.

I. A Rich Young Ruler Seeking Eternal Life. — Vs. 17, 18. **17. And when he was gone forth:** from the house where he had blessed the children. He starts again on his journey to Jerusalem. **There came one running.** By a comparison with Matthew and Luke we learn that he was (1) a ruler, probably of a synagogue; a leading man in Jewish religious circles. (2) He was young. (3) He was very rich. (4) He was religiously trained. (5) He had heard of Jesus and listened to his teachings, or he would not have come to him in this way. (6) He had a lovable disposition (Mark 10: 21).

HIS CHARACTER. (1) This young man seems to have had from a worldly point of view an irreproachable moral character. He had resisted the corrupting influences around him. (2) He was a candid inquirer, breaking away from the routine religion of his synagogue, and recognizing truth and goodness wherever he saw it. (3) He was courageous. Only a brave heart could have enabled one in so prominent a position to risk the opposition and reproaches of his associates, and run and reverence in so public a manner the despised Nazarene. (4) He had high aspirations. He was not content with wealth, and position, and outward morality, but had set his heart on eternal life. (5) He was in earnest, as his conduct shows. But on the other hand he was (a) self-righteous. (b) He had wrong or imperfect motives behind his outward goodness. (c) He was unwilling to trust everything, even his worldly wealth, in God's hands. **Running:** showing his earnestness. "They that will have eternal life must run for it: because the devil, the law, sin, death, and hell follow them." — *Bunyan*. **And kneeled to him:** as to a great teacher. This showed his reverence. **Good Master** (or teacher), **what shall I do?** In Matthew, *what good thing shall I do?* What act of sacrifice or heroism, what generous action, what penance or suffering? He has the idea of purchasing, of deserving, of inheriting eternal life. **That I may inherit eternal life?** That is, he wished to be a child of God, and as a child inherit from his Heavenly Father, and so have lasting possession of eternal life. On *Eternal Life*, see Lesson VII.

SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE. Of all things in the universe this is the great prize we should seek with all our hearts and souls. For it includes every other good, God, heaven, holiness, usefulness, happiness. Just so far as we have eternal life can we know God, or heaven, or any highest good. Therefore, like Bunyan's Pilgrim fleeing from the city of Destruction with his fingers in his ears, crying out, Life, Life, so we should run from the city of spiritual death to the city of eternal life.

18. Why callest thou me good? With the emphasis on *good*. Then, according to Matthew (R. V.), Jesus explains the question by adding, *Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?* These questions are not a rebuke, nor a denial that Christ was good, but an attempt to lead the young man upward in his seeking to the only ideal of good and only source of good. The young man used the common title of respect for a teacher; but Christ would ask him whether he looks upon him merely as any other teacher; or does he recognize him as a divine teacher, the only one who is truly good, the "good master" who knows all things, whose teaching is eternally true, who can show him "the good." It is as if he asked, Are you a sincere inquirer after the good? **There is none good but one, that is, God.** But Christ is God, and so does not deny his own goodness. "If you wish to know about the good, you must rise inquiringly to God, who is the Supreme Good for the whole universe. And hence that which is the supreme good for every moral creature to do and to be must be learned from God, must be found in the will of God." — *Morison*. "God does not keep his goodness to himself, but diffuses it, seeks to make men after his own pattern of goodness." — *Sadler*.

19. Thou knowest the commandments, Do ¹ not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

20. And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

21. Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure ² in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honour thy father and mother.

And he said unto him, 20 (c) Master, all these things have I observed from my youth.

And Jesus looking upon 21 him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.

¹ Ex. 20. Rom. 13: 9.

² Matt. 6: 19, 20. Luke 12: 33.

(c) Or, Teacher.

THE OBJECT of the reply of Jesus was therefore (1) to lead the young man to truer ideas of what goodness and eternal life were; (2) to lead him from self-righteousness to the true and only source of the highest good; (3) to raise the youth's ideas of himself as the Son of God, as the source of truth and good, and thus to give authority in his mind to his teachings and to his command to sell all that he had.

THUS WE SEE THE FIRST STEP in the upward path, — a high ideal which convinces of sin, while it points to God and his Son Jesus.

II. **The Conditions of Eternal Life.** — Vs. 19, 20. 19. Thou knowest the commandments. This implies what Matthew expresses, *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*. The young man then asks *which?* Of what kind? What special and great commandment do you refer to? Then Jesus replies by enumerating those named in this verse. **Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, etc.** All these belong to the second table of the law, which teaches the duties of man to man. Jesus, it would seem, desired to show the man the true nature, the living soul, of ordinary daily life. Perhaps Jesus did not refer to the first table of the law, because the keeping of the second was a test as to whether the ruler really kept the first. He that truly loves man loves God.

HERE WAS THE SECOND STEP, — a conviction of sin and imperfection, by measuring one's self by the law in its divine strictness.

KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS, AND ETERNAL LIFE. (1) There is no complete eternal life without the keeping of the commandments, and no beginnings of eternal life without the spirit which seeks, longs, and endeavors to keep them. For (2) the commandments are the expression of the true principles of holy living. Good people, saints, and angels in heaven live according to the commandments. (3) A person may keep the commandments in outward form and yet not have eternal life. (4) The commandments are the divine standard which shows us how much we have failed in the true life, and by which the Holy Spirit convinces us of sin and need. For (5) no one ever entered eternal life by merely trying to keep the commandments. (6) Jesus Christ has come to save us, by implanting that new life, that loving and obedient spirit, which will lead to the keeping of the commandments. Jesus saves not *in* sin, but *from* sin.

20. Master, all these have I observed from my youth. He had sincerely tried to live a good moral life. He had guided his actions by these laws in outward form, with good success. But he did not know their full spiritual meaning. Then he adds, as in Matthew, *What lack I yet?* After all his **What Lack I Yet?** endeavors he was conscious of failure, as is shown by his coming to Jesus at all. He was not satisfied. He did not possess what he wanted. He knew that with all his keeping of the law he had not attained to eternal life. How many of us have had the same experience, and found that "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh be justified." There remains "an aching void."

III. **The Failure. "One Thing Thou Lackest."** — Vs. 21, 22. 21. Then Jesus beholding him (looking upon him, with a fixed and earnest gaze) loved him. He was so noble, so earnest and sincere in his seeking, so lovable, that the soul of Jesus was drawn out toward him. And all the more because he was not satisfied with any outward keeping of the law. Jesus saw in him great possibilities of character, and of service, a pillar in the temple of God, a power for good in the new kingdom. And said unto him, **One thing thou lackest.** He was very near the kingdom, but one link in the chain was gone, and that broke the whole chain.

22. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

But his countenance fell 22 at the saying, and he went away sorrowful: for he was one that had great possessions.

THE ONE THING LACKING was Love, and Faith, its Siamese twin, — faithful love and loving faith expressed in entire consecration of all he was and all he had to God. It was like the sun lacking light, or a fire lacking heat, or a man lacking a soul. It was to bring this element into our lives that Christ died. **Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, not for himself, but to give to the poor.** To use his wealth for God and humanity. Jesus here touched the center of the young man's difficulty. He was willing to commit to God everything except his property. That he was not ready to trust to God's direction. But the withholding anything from God proves that we do not really trust him, or love him, we do not belong to his kingdom. **Sell What Thou Hast. And thou shalt have treasure in heaven:** you will have the character which belongs to heaven, and God will reward you abundantly there for all your self-denials for his sake. The treasure was thus the eternal life he sought. See Matthew 6: 19-21. **And come:** come to Jesus, to his character and person. Live near to him. **Take up the cross.** Not only the cross of selling all he had, but all the self-denials necessary in being a follower of Jesus. He would have many reproaches to bear from those who thought he acted like a fool; his family would oppose; his heirs hate; sunshine friends would desert him. **And follow me.** To follow Jesus *then* meant to be a personal attendant on his ministry; to go about with him from place to place, as well as to imitate and obey him. *Now* it means (1) to obey his commandments; (2) to imitate his example, and to live like him. — *Barnes.*

WHAT THIS MEANS FOR US. Mr. Sadler says, "This incident is of the utmost importance, as showing that Christ distinctly recognizes two ways of religious life, the ordinary religious life, and the life of perfection. The ordinary religious life, so far as the retention of worldly possessions is concerned, is set forth in the injunctions of Saint Paul to Timothy: 'Charge them who are rich in this world . . . (not that they surrender at once all that they have, but) that they be not high minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God . . . that they do good, that they be rich in good works.' The life of perfection was set forth in the life of Saint Paul himself." One is "the godly, righteous, and sober life, springing out of faith in the person and work of the Redeemer," the other "the apostolic life"; and in the answer to "What lack I yet?" Jesus calls the young man, not to the ordinary religious life, but to join the company of the apostles, in their peculiarly self-denying life, the "life of perfection."

I am not quite sure just what Dr. Sadler means by this, but it seems to me that the *principle* is the same for all of us as for him; all lives are to be in principle and consecration "lives of perfection." But the form it takes in action may differ. That principle is that we are to give up everything to Christ — our property, our time, our all — *to use as he would have us.* We are to give so much as he directs; to leave all, and be missionaries, if he demands; to suffer the loss of all, if that is needful, in order that we may do right; to spend upon our families, our business, our pleasure, just as Christ would have us. The man who gives up all to be a minister or missionary and the man whose vocation is business are to be equally consecrated, are equally to follow Jesus. There are "two vocations," but one principle, one spirit. Jesus did not require Zaccheus to give up all his property. To make this the requirement of Christianity would be to destroy civilization and progress and prevent the millennium. To do what Christ meant and taught in other places would produce exactly the opposite effect. "Was not this what Christ enjoined upon the young ruler — a conscious, willing transfer of his great possessions from himself to God, in such a real way as that henceforth *his sense of ownership* in them should cease, and a *sense of stewardship* should take its place?" — *S. J. Humphrey, D. D.*

22. And he was sad, R. V., *his countenance fell.* The condition was so unexpected and so hard. **And went away grieved: for he had great possessions.** He went away reluctantly, after a great struggle, but he went. He wanted eternal life, but he wanted his possessions more, and he could not have both. How little joy his stately houses and broad lands would give him after this! He could never again look upon them without seeing on them, in flaming letters, like those on the barrels in Deacon Giles' distillery,

The Failure.

23. And Jesus looked round about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

24. And the disciples were astonished at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

And Jesus looked round 23 about, and saith unto his disciples, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!

And the disciples were 24 amazed at his words. But Jesus answereth again, and saith unto them, Children, how hard is it (d) for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God!

¹ Job 31: 24. Psa. 52: 7; 62: 10. 1 Tim. 6: 17.

(d) Some ancient authorities omit *for them that trust in riches.*

"This cost me eternal life." The incident recalls the parable of the "merchant man seeking goodly pearls" (Matt. 13: 45, 46). Here is a seeker after good, the pearl is found; will he not sell all that he hath and buy it?—*Cambridge Bible*. No one, of course, can say that he did not repent and believe later. But if he had obeyed Christ at this time, he would have received an hundred-fold in return, as Jesus afterwards promised to Peter (vs. 28-30). The young ruler's name is unknown, his influence unfelt. In a few years his possessions were ravaged by the Roman legions, while the disciples introduced a new and blessed kingdom on earth, whose influence is widening all down the ages.

IV. Instruction from This Story.—Vs. 23-27. 23. How hardly,

i. e., with what difficulty, shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God! is amply confirmed by experience. Christian men often become rich, but rich men rarely become Christians. The reason is not far to seek: the process of gaining wealth encourages self-seeking, and the possession of it encourages self-importance; but the spirit that can enter the kingdom is the spirit of a little child.—*American Commentary*.

The emphasis may be on "have," and refer to those the purpose of whose life is to acquire or enjoy riches, whose treasures are of this world, as explained in verse 24, **How hard is it for them that trust in riches.** The danger of riches is the strong tendency in those who possess them to trust in them. But what are riches? How large possessions must be counted as riches? The best measure is that implied in the word "trust." Peter, Matthew, and John apparently had possessions, but they were not rich. A competency is not riches. And this varies at different times and in different circumstances. "It is not the kind or quantity of the wealth possessed, but the kind or quantity of the attachment that is lavished upon it. The love of the penny may create as great impediment as the love of the pound."—*Hanna*. In fact, many who have *not* riches are seeking wealth as the chief good, because they already *trust* in it.—*Schaff*. Jesus has no ill-will toward the rich as a class, nor would he encourage it.—*Jacobus*. For that would be to lay an undue emphasis upon riches. It is not possessions, large or small, but character which is essential to eternal life.

24. And the disciples were astonished. This teaching was so contrary to all former teaching and the whole trend of thought and desire among the people. "Like all Jews, they had been accustomed to regard worldly prosperity as a special mark of the favor of God, for their ancient scriptures seemed always to connect the enjoyment of temporal blessings with obedience to the divine law."—*Geikie*. Jesus himself had said that "all these things should be added unto them" if they sought first the kingdom of heaven. And doubtless among the glowing visions of the new kingdom and the splendors they hoped for was an abundance of riches. **Saith unto them, Children.** Children in their want of training in spiritual things, their short-sightedness, their emphasis on the present. Then he explains his meaning as above.



Needle's Eye.

25. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

26. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?

27. And Jesus looking upon them saith, With men *it is* impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible.

It is easier for a camel to 25 go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.

And they were astonished 26 exceedingly, saying (e) unto him, Then who can be saved?

Jesus looking upon them 27 saith, With men it is impossible, but not with God: for all things are possible with God.

(e) Many ancient authorities read *among themselves*.

25. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. The camel being the largest animal with which the Jews were acquainted, its name became proverbial for denoting anything remarkably large; and "a camel's passing through a needle's eye came, by consequence, as appears from *The Needle's Eye*. some rabbinical writings, to express a thing absolutely impossible." — *George Campbell, Oriental Proverbs*. "Just as soon will an elephant pass through the spout of a kettle." — *Roberts*. The eye of a needle is either the small door sometimes made in the city gates, called the needle's eye by the Arabs, — large enough for a man, but too small for a camel, — or, rather, the oriental needle, of burnished iron, from two to five inches long, or their large ivory tape-needle. — *Van Lennep*. The fact of the small gate — "to which attention was first called in Lord Nugent's *Lands, Classical and Sacred* — is certainly interesting, and, could the earlier use of the term in this sense be proved, would give a certain vividness to our Lord's imagery." — *Ellicott*. But it is now generally thought that the calling this small gate "the needle's eye" is a modern custom, and not in use in the time of Christ. The proverb used by our Lord is intended to express, not the difficulty, but the impossibility of entering the kingdom of heaven by human power or skill. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle *than for a rich man* (i. e., as already explained, one who trusts in riches) *to enter into the kingdom of God*. — *Abbott*. So long as he *trusts* in riches, to enter the kingdom is impossible from the very nature of the kingdom.

I would ride the camel,
Yes, leap him flying, through the needle's eye,
As easily as such a pampered soul
Could pass the narrow gate. — *Soutkey*.

But more than this it is difficult for any rich man to pass through the strait gate.

WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT FOR THE RICH TO ENTER INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

(1) Because they feel that they have so much to give up to Christ. (2) Because of the tendency to trust in riches, and not to feel the need of a Saviour. (3) Because riches are apt to engender pride that will not stoop to the humble service of God. (4) Because rich men are apt to be allied in business and socially with many who

are not Christians, and it requires great courage and faith to break away. (5) Because in many cases they will have to restore ill-gotten riches, to change their business or methods of business and sources of gain, which are not truly Christian. (6) Because it is especially difficult to invite them, to reach them with the gospel message.

Impediments of riches.

26. Who then can be saved? Since the passion for riches was almost universal, and they themselves, the disciples and apostles of the kingdom, were dreaming of them in the new kingdom. Or they argued, "If the rich, or the more highly favored class, are thus impeded and endangered by the very advantages which they enjoy, how can others be expected to attain salvation? Similarly Godet: to exclude the rich from salvation was, it seemed, to exclude all; for, if the most blessed among men can only be saved with difficulty, what will become of the rest." — *President Dwight*.

27. With men it is impossible. "Not now difficult, but more. On human principles or by any power of man it cannot be done." — *American Commentary*. With God all things are possible. He can remove these great difficulties. He can renew the heart. He can take away the love of riches. He can transform the hindrances into steps heavenward. He can put into a man's heart new motives, that will make him more diligent in business than the love of riches can, that will make him full of usefulness and helpfulness. All this, and infinitely more, by the mission and atonement of Christ.

OTHER HINDRANCES. A large proportion of the children who study this lesson will not be kept out of the kingdom by riches. But the principles here taught will apply to them. Some are hindered by their parents' riches, some by the desire of riches, some by the desire for honor and praise, some by fear of what their companion will say, some by wrong acts they are unwilling to confess, some by bad habits they are unwilling to give up.

V. Rewards.—When Jesus had given this instruction, the disciples, through Peter, asked what would be the result of their giving up all to follow him. Jesus replied that they should "receive an hundred-fold now in this time." (1) As to the community, this truth can be easily seen by comparing a Christian home in a Christian land with any heathen home. The mother, the brother, the sister, the home, as Christianity makes them, are an hundred-fold more blessed, more useful, more worthy than the same in a heathen land. (2) The Christian, as an individual, obtains an hundred-fold more than others from this life. The world is so governed that a Christian, temperate life gives far the most happiness, take the whole life through. The educated musician gets an hundred-fold more from music, the one of cultivated tastes an hundred-fold more from flowers, from beauty, from literature. The devoted student finds an hundred-fold more in the Bible. What is useless steam to one becomes the power that moves the engine. What is barren rock to one becomes a mine of silver and gold. What is but lightning to one becomes the telegraph and telephone.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

A most effective illustration is found in the tract, *Captain Ball's Experience*; also in Trench's *Poems*, "Mahmoud the Idol-Breaker." Three sermons by MacDonald, in Dr. C. S. Robinson's *Sabbath Evening*; William Adams's *Conversations of Christ with Representative Men*, "The Moralist"; Prof. W. G. T. Shedd's *Sermons to the Natural Man*, "The Sin of Omission." *Sermons* by H. W. Beecher, series 5; by J. Wesley; Guthrie's *Way of Life*, "One Thing Needful"; Barnes' *Way of Salvation*, "The Struggles of a Convicted Sinner." Whateley's *Annotations on Bacon's Essays*, p. 366, "Riches"; Bertram's *Homiletic Cyclopadia*, 4365, "Ruined by Riches"; 4371, "The Devil's Bait"; 4397, "The Sailor Who Would Die Rich"; 4418, "The Fly in the Honey"; Cawdray's *Storehouse of Similies*, pp. 303-308, "Riches and their Dangers"; Spencer's *Things New and Old*, 156, "The Narrow-mouthed Bottle."

GUIDEBOARDS TO ETERNAL LIFE.

FROM THE EXPERIENCE OF THE YOUNG RULER.

(When Christian and Faithful had escaped from the dungeon of Giant Despair, they set up a guideboard at the place where the path turned from the Way of Life toward the dungeon, as a warning to other travellers.)

1. The most important thing any one can do is to seek earnestly after eternal life.
2. Moreover, it is a matter of haste. We need it now. If we delay, it may be too late.
3. Jesus has the words of eternal life, and to him we should go.
4. God himself is good, and the Good to be sought. To be like him, to be his children, heirs of his character and home, is eternal life.
5. The commandments are the outward expressions of holiness. No one can have eternal life who does not strive to live according to them. No one can be saved by the commandments, but much less can he be saved without them.
6. No outward morality, however perfect, will satisfy the soul. There is ever something lacking, unsatisfactory.
7. Only those who consecrate all they have and are to God can have eternal life; for the faith and love which lead to this consecration are the soul of eternal life.
8. Jesus loves the earnest seeker. He sees the possibilities in us. He longs to develop them, as a florist loves to see a seed change into a flower, or an acorn into an oak.
9. There is great value in the test of a great sacrifice and consecration. If accepted, it enlarges the soul; it lifts up the inner life into conscious assurance. The heart follows the treasure. There is a transfiguring power in such a sacrifice. We miss great things by not accepting the sacrifice and self-denial, as one misses much in this world who refuses to learn music or literature.
10. Riches, and the supreme desire for riches, by engendering pride, self-sufficiency, cares, and selfishness, often by being gained or kept by fraud and oppression, keep many from the kingdom.
11. The real evil is not in the amount, but the love of riches. To love riches while we have them not, is as bad as to love them when we have them.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SUBJECT: SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE.

I. A YOUNG MAN SEEKING ETERNAL LIFE (vs. 17, 18). The position and character of the young man. What led him — what leads others — to seek eternal life? What is eternal life? The steps by which the young man was led on toward eternal life.

II. ON THE WAY TO ETERNAL LIFE (vs. 19, 20).

Illustration. We cannot push a railroad train by our hands, try we never so hard; but we can let on the steam, and thus move it. We cannot make ourselves good by trying to keep the commandments, but we can go to Jesus, who will give us a new heart, a new life, that will lead us to holiness.

Illustration. Men are sometimes self-righteous because all they see in the law is an outward formal keeping of its precepts which they can attain; as a child, seeing a star rising over the hills, may think it but a street-lamp, and that he can easily reach it; but whosoever sees the spirit of the law, as the expression of God's holy character, will be convicted of sin, for he will see how high, and great, and radiant that law is; as to the astronomer the child's star is known to be infinitely above him, a measureless world of light.

III. FAILURE THROUGH ONE THING LACKING (vs. 21, 22).

Illustrations. "See, there stands a cannon. It is charged with powder, and the ball has been rammed home properly. Is that cannon of any use as yet? No. Why not? Simply because it lacks as yet one thing. 'The spark.' Yes, without the spark, all else is vain. A child may play around that cannon with perfect security. But let the spark be added, and the cannon at once becomes a weapon of fearful power.

The largest steamer in the world is the Great Eastern. Once she was caught in a fearful storm. All went well, however; the engines worked as they should, and the ship behaved finely. All at once the helm broke, and in a moment everything was changed. Now nothing went well, and the ship was in imminent danger of foundering. And all for the lack of only one thing. In fact, the world is full of instances where the lack of some one thing is fatal to success." — *Rev. A. F. Schauffer.*

Illustration.

"A finger's breadth at hand may mar
A world of light in heaven afar;
A mote eclipse a glorious star."

IV. INSTRUCTION (vs. 23-27).

Illustration. "In one of England's great cathedrals rests one whose gravestone, according to his own direction, bears but the single word, *Miserimus*, 'most miserable.' He was a man of wealth and position, or his sepulchre could not have been there." "A spiritual giant buried under a mountain of gold."

Illustration. Mahmoud, the great Mohammedan conqueror of India, when he had reached Somnât, an idol fifteen feet high facing the entrance of the temple, instantly ordered the image to be destroyed; but the Brahmins threw themselves before him and offered an enormous ransom if he would spare their deity. "Mahmoud, after a moment's pause, declared that he would rather be known as the breaker than the seller of idols, and struck the image with his mace. His example was instantaneously followed, and the image, which was hollow, burst with the blows and poured forth a quantity of diamonds and other jewels which amply repaid Mahmoud for the sacrifice of the ransom." — *Elphinstone.*

Thou, too, heaven's commissioned warrior to cast down each idol throne
In thy heart's profaned temple, make this faithful deed thine own.

Let descend the faithful blow;

From their wreck and from their ruin first will thy true riches flow.

Thou shalt lose thy life, and find it; thou shalt boldly cast it forth;

And then, back again receiving, know it in its endless worth.

— *Trench.*

LESSON XI. — MARCH 17.

ZACCHEUS THE PUBLICAN — LUKE 19: 1-10.

Golden Text. — *The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.* —

LUKE 19: 10.

THE SECTION includes Luke 18: 35 to 19: 28.

TIME. — The last of March, A. D. 30. Only a little more than a week before the Crucifixion.

PLACE. — Jericho.

INTERVENING HISTORY.—After the interview with the rich young ruler, Jesus spoke the parable of the laborers in the vineyard (Matt. 20: 1-16). Proceeding on his way to Jerusalem, he announced to his disciples his death and resurrection (Matt. 20: 17-19). Then Salome and her two sons, James and John, came to Jesus, as king, for the chief places in his new kingdom (Matt. 20: 20-29). When Jesus reached Jericho he restored sight to Bartimeus and another blind man (Luke 18: 35-43); and as he was leaving the city for Jerusalem occurred the incident of Zaccheus.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Bārtimē'ūs. Pēre'ā. Zācchē'ūs (Zākkē'ūs).

1. And *Jesus* entered and passed through Jericho.
2. And, behold, *there was* a man named Zaccheus, which was the chief among the publicans, and he was rich.

And he entered and was *passing* through Jericho.

And behold, a man called *2* by name Zacchæus; and he was a chief publican, and he was rich.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Seeker.—Vs. 1, 2. 1. And Jesus entered and passed (was passing) through Jericho. On his last journey to Jerusalem. He had crossed the Jordan westward since our last lesson. **Jericho.** City of the moon, or place of fragrance. The largest city in the valley of the Jordan, about twenty miles northeast of Jerusalem, on the west side of the River Jordan, north of its entrance into the Dead Sea. In the time of Christ Jericho was wealthy and flourishing. — *Whitney*.

2. Behold, there was a man named Zaccheus. He was a Jew (v. 9). His name is Hebrew from a root meaning *pure*, in contrast with his former character and reputation. Which was chief among the publicans, or gatherers of revenue for the Romans. The taxes imposed by the Romans on subject nations were farmed out to men of wealth, who, for a specified sum paid at once into the Roman treasury, obtained the right of collecting the taxes of a province or city. These contractors, who were usually Roman knights, entrusted the actual collection of taxes to sub-contractors or tax-gatherers. This system, which is still prevalent in the East, gave the widest scope for rapacity and extortion. — *G. W. Clark*. It is probable that Zaccheus was the sub-contractor under the Roman knight who had bought out this privilege at Jericho, and "as such he had as abundant opportunities for enriching himself as a Turkish pacha." "At Jericho was one of the principal custom houses. Here alone was cultivated the famous balm of Gilead, now quite extinct, and not a native of the country, but of the east coast of Africa. Tradition said it was originally introduced by the Queen of Sheba, who gave some roots to King Solomon. From here plants were taken by Cleopatra for her gardens at Heliopolis. It was always a government monopoly, and imperial guards were placed over the plantations. Hence the importance of the position of the tax-gatherer at Jericho, who naturally would be a chief officer of the publicans. Besides the revenue from the balsam, Jericho was the great halting-place for caravans from North Arabia to Palestine and Egypt, and here they paid the duties on their merchandise." — *Canon Tristram*.

ZACCHEUS was (1) rich. "It was very little to the credit of Zaccheus that he had made money in the way he told of (so far as he made it in that way). It is the poorest thing said of him." — *Trumbull*. But what he says of himself in verse 8 implies that most of his wealth was not gained in dishonest ways, for if it had been he could not have restored fourfold. He had every opportunity to amass wealth, though Prof. Isaac Hall thinks he must also "have been rich to start with, as otherwise he could not have purchased his position." (2) He had not an

Publicans.

Custom House at Jericho.



Ruins of an Aqueduct, Jericho.

3. And he sought to see Jesus, who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature.

And he sought to see Jesus 3 who he was; and could not for the crowd, because he was little of stature.

altogether clear conscience as to the way he had gained some of his riches (v. 8). He was in some degree convicted of sin, and that conviction may have been deepened by what he had heard of the teachings of Jesus, and his example of ever helping and giving to all whom he could aid. (3) He was not satisfied with his riches, but felt desires and longings for better things and a nobler life. He could no more satisfy his soul with riches than his thirst with the salt waters of the sea. (4) He was a publican, a religious outcast, from whom nothing good was expected, and in whom every evil was looked for. He was apparently on the side of the enemies and oppressors of his nation. But (5) he was a Jew. He had had religious instruction in his youth, and had a knowledge of better things than the life he was living.

II. The Seeking. — V. 3. **And he sought to see Jesus.** Greek, *kept seeking*, resolved not to cease. — *Van Doren*. **Who he was.** Reports of his miracles and teachings in Perea, not far away beyond the Jordan, were brought by crowds who were coming through Jericho, on their way to the Passover at Jerusalem, and the air was full of rumors and stories about the great prophet.

HIS MOTIVES FOR SEEKING JESUS. (1) It is probable that curiosity had something to do with awakening his interest. (2) "From many hints in the Gospels, it seems that a work of grace was going on amongst the publicans as a class. (See Luke 3: 12; 5: 29; 7: 29; 15: 1; 18: 10. These should be taken together)." — *Sadler*. Thus the general pervading influence around him would move him. (3) His awakened conscience would give him no rest or peace. (4) He had longings after a better life. (5) What he had heard of Jesus kindled a hope within him that the galling chains which bound him to his old life might be broken. Jesus had parted the clouds and let in rays of light and hope. A new life was possible, since the new prophet had been favorable to publicans and sinners, instead of joining in the customary contempt and hatred. **And could not for the press.** The crowd who surrounded Jesus after he had given sight to blind Bartimeus. Jesus was walking among the crowd as one of them, with nothing to distinguish him, or lift him above the others. **Because he was little of stature,** and could not see over the heads of the multitude.

HINDRANCES TO A RELIGIOUS LIFE. There were not a few hindrances in the way of Zaccheus, which are well brought out in Robertson's unsurpassed sermon on this lesson. (1) There was the outward hindrance of the crowds, which presented no small difficulty, because it must be overcome at once, or the opportunity would be forever lost. (2) His profession gave him great and easy opportunities to do wrong with impunity, yet to the increase of his own gains. (3) It tended to make him satisfied with a low standard of morality, according to the customs of the business in which he was engaged. (4) Zaccheus was tempted to that hardness in evil which comes from having no character to support. Nothing but evil was expected of him, and thus society itself held him down. (5) Another

hindrance lay in the recollection of past guilt. "Remorse is like the clog of an insoluble debt. The debtor is proverbially extravagant. A little more or less makes no difference, so he plunges further into debt." "If a man lose the world's respect he can retreat back upon the consciousness of God within. But if a man lose his own respect he sinks down and down, and deeper yet, until he can get it back again only by feeling that he is sublimely loved." (6) Past guilt becomes a hindrance, too, by making fresh sin easier. (7) All his associations in business and society hold him back. To re-



Road from Bethphage (Fig Trees in the Foreground).

4. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him; for he was to pass that way.

And he ran on before, and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way.

5. And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.

And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and said unto him, Zaccheus, make haste, and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house.

pent was to declare that not only himself, but his companions, too, were wrong. At the same time he had no one in the better society to hold him up.

WHY SUCH HINDRANCES ARE ALLOWED. (1) To test and prove a man's sincerity; (2) to increase his faith and earnestness; (3) to sift out hypocrites from the roll of Christ's followers; (4) to make clear to the man himself, when he begins to follow Jesus, that he has really changed, and is on the Lord's side. So far as God allows difficulties in men's way it is not to keep them out of heaven, but to be like the resistance of the air to the wings of a bird, or like the hidden treasures of nature, the search for which develops the intellect and strengthens the character.

COMPARE the earnestness of this rich man with that of the rich young ruler of our last lesson.

III. **Overcoming Obstacles.** — V. 4. **And he ran before** the multitude, along the path in which they were coming. **And climbed up into a sycamore tree.** Properly *sycamore*, as in R. V. "This tree was not at all like our sycamore, into which, tall as a steeple and smooth as hypocrisy, Zaccheus could never have climbed, — a squirrel cannot even scale them." — *Bible Plants*. It was the Egyptian fig tree, and is called sycamore, from *sukon* fig, and *moron*, mulberry, because it resembles the fig in its fruit and the mulberry in its leaves. Some old writers derived it from fig and *mōros*, foolish, because it produced worthless figs. (See *M. R. Vincent*, in *Sycamore trees*.

Word Studies.) "It grows to a large size, sometimes a circumference of fifty feet, and is evergreen. It is not a tall, but a wide-spreading tree, and, with its low, laterally extending branches and dark foliage, recalls the English oak. It is consequently, on account of its shade, a favorite wayside tree. With its very short trunk and wide horizontal branches, it is very easy to climb, and would naturally be selected by Zaccheus as an accessible position, where he could sit overhanging the path, and thus obtain a view of our Lord as he passed underneath him, from his 'coign of vantage.'" — *Canon Tristram*, in *Sunday School Times*.

SUGGESTIONS. (1) Note the earnestness of Zaccheus. "Where there is a will there is a way." (2) "The ridicule that such an action would entail on Zaccheus ought to be remembered. A wealthy publican climbing up into a tree, after running along a road, in order to see a religious teacher, would doubtless call forth mockery." — *Kyle*. "Such crowds are rarely reverential to great men." "He has not, or, if he has, he overcomes that false pride, through which so many precious opportunities, and oftentimes in the highest things of all, are lost." — *Trench*. **Earnestness.**

(3) There are times when, not being on a level with other men in qualifications of temper, mind, character, we must compensate by inventions and Christian expedients. You must climb over the crowd of difficulties which stand between your soul and Christ; you must "run before," and get into the sycamore solitude. — *Robertson*. (4) Often by reason of the crowd of worldly affairs and our low spiritual stature we cannot see Christ. But there are sycamores in the road by which he will pass. He has given us the *means of grace*, — Scripture, prayer, ordinances. These are the trees he has planted in the wayside of life. Like Zaccheus, let us ascend the tree, and we shall not only see Christ, but he will come and abide with us. — *Wordsworth*.

IV. **The Finding.** — Vs. 5-7. The action of Zaccheus was really a prayer, which Jesus answered in his own way, and gave vastly more than the publican expected. 5. **And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him.** He knew both his name and his heart's desire, either from his supernatural knowledge of man (*Alford*), or "he might easily learn his name and something of his character from the comments which his conduct would draw from the crowd." — *Bliss*. **Zaccheus, make haste, and come down.** Words of extraordinary grace, for, while the Lord *accepted* many invitations (Luke 7: 36; 11: 37; 14: 1), yet we do not read that he honored any but this publican by thus offering himself to share his hospitality. The reader will remember the words of the Lord

6. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

7. And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, ¹ That he was gone to be guest with a man that is a sinner.

8. And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken anything from any man by ² false accusation, ³ I restore him fourfold.

And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully.

And when they saw it, they all murmured, saying, He is gone in to lodge with a man that is a sinner.

And Zaccheus stood, and said unto the Lord, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold.

¹ Matt. 9: 11. Luke 5: 30.

² Luke 3: 14.

³ Ex. 22: 1. 1 Sam. 12: 3. 2 Sam. 12: 6.



Branch of Figs.

to the church of Laodicea: "If any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with me"

(Rev. 3: 20).—*Sadler*. **For to-day I must abide at thy house.** Possibly over night; **Jesus at Zaccheus' House.** but it is more likely that it was to be a mid-day rest, and that in the afternoon (Friday, as we think) our Lord passed to the neighborhood of Bethany, where he supped in the house of Simon, the leper, after sunset on Saturday. The distance was not too great for an afternoon's walk.—*Schaff*. **I must.** The must of love. It is part of Jesus' plan of work. The lost sheep must be brought home.

6. And he made haste. If Zaccheus had not been alert now, he would have failed of his only opportunity. That is always a memorable time in any man's history when, through a book, a letter, a personal interview, a sermon, a special providence, he is brought into contact with that spiritual power which arrests his waywardness and changes the whole current of his being.—*Wm. Adams*. **And received him joyfully.** He had obtained not only what he had hoped for, but a great deal more, fulfilling the desires of his heart which he had not dared to express even to himself. When one really wishes to

leave sin, and come to Christ, then nothing is so joyful as repenting, and receiving Christ, and living in love.

CONTRAST with the sadness of the rich young ruler when invited to become a disciple of Jesus.

7. And when they saw it, they all murmured. Scarcely the disciples, but the crowd of Jews.—*Revised Commentary*. The action of Christ was very unpopular, and it required great courage thus to brave the almost universal national feeling. The very actions by which he proved himself the true Messiah were regarded by the nation as unworthy of their Messiah. **That he was gone to be guest:** a friendly, social visit, as with an equal. It does not necessarily imply that he remained over night. (See on v. 5.) **With a man that is a sinner,** a disreputable outcast, a notorious sinner; "Zaccheus, as a publican, would thus be termed, whatever his character had been." Jesus singled this man out to the neglect of the many prominent men in the company.

JESUS WELCOMES all sinners who look to him, and are willing to leave their sins. The greatest sinner need not despair, if he repents and forsakes his sin. Jesus did exactly what the churches should do to-day.

V. The Confession and Consecration.—**V. 8. And Zaccheus stood:** stood forth, stood up before his family and whatever guests were present in solemn profession and consecration. He would confess his reformation and his intention to live a new life before all. Thus, like Cortez, burning the **Gift to the Poor.** ships behind him to leave no opportunity of retreat. **Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor.** Some consider this to mean that this was his habit, in which case "the half of his goods" refers to half of his yearly income (so *Goder*). But it is much more probable that it states what he now determines to do with his property. He does it immediately, on the spot; there is no delay. He does not put it in his will, to be given after he is dead.

9. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forasmuch as ¹ he also is ² a son of Abraham.

And Jesus said unto him, 9
To-day is salvation come to
this house, forasmuch as he
also is a son of Abraham.

¹ Rom. 4: 11, 12, 16. Gal. 3: 7.

² Luke 13: 16.

FIRST PROOF OF HIS SINCERITY. Zaccheus felt that love for Christ means love for those whom Christ loved and came to save. It was not done to prove to men his sincerity, but it was the natural outflow of sincere repentance and conversion to Christ. Thus only would it be a proof. So Abou Ben Ahdem, in Leigh Hunt's poem, when he found his name was not yet in the book of those who loved the Lord, said: "Write me as one who loves his fellowmen,"—and "Lo, Ben Ahdem's name led all the rest." It has been well said that "a personal consecration" should be spelled "a purse-and-all consecration."

CONTRAST this with the action of the rich young ruler.

"It is important to give to the poor. But the poor ought not to receive stolen property. That should go back to its rightful owner. Many of the public plunderers and of the defaulters of the present day have been far readier to make donations to the poor and to subscribe liberally to religious enterprises than to pay back a tithe of their stealings to those whom they had defrauded. There was no religion in their course. Restitution is even a surer sign than almsgiving of a regenerate heart and a Christian life."—*H. C. Trumbull.*

SECOND PROOF OF HIS SINCERITY. And if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation. The "if" does not imply doubt, but, being used with the indicative mood in the Greek, denotes a supposition according to fact, implying that he had done such wrong in the past. Seven words of our English translation, "I have taken from . . . by false accusation," are all expressed by one Greek word, "sycophanted," from *sykon*, a fig, and *phaino*, to show. "If I have sycophanted any one." "At Athens those were called sycophants whose business it was to inform against any one whom they might detect exporting figs out of Attica (or plundering sacred fig trees, *Liddell*), and, as sometimes they seem to have extorted money from those loath to be exposed, the name sycophants from the time of Aristophanes down was a general term of opprobrium to designate a malignant informer, a base accuser from love of gain. Hence any one who exacts money wrongfully."—*Thayer's Lexicon.* According to Mr. Shadwell, a sycophant means a *fig shewer*, i. e., one who brings figs to light by shaking the tree,—the figs having been hidden in the thick foliage; hence one who makes rich men yield up their fruit by informations, and other vile acts.—*Liddell and Scott's Lexicon.* I restore him fourfold. Not a declaration of his past habit, but the expression of a new purpose. "There seems, indeed, something almost ludicrously incongruous in a devout man boasting that his rule of life is to make amends to those whom he deliberately cheats, and the special force of the verb practically excludes the idea of involuntary wrong." The whole force of the history seems lost if we suppose Zaccheus, as some have done, to have been a model of a virtuous publican before he sought to see Jesus. On that supposition his words are like those of the Pharisee in the parable, a self-righteous boast.—*Plumptre.* According to the Jewish law, while those who were convicted of the theft of sheep were punished by a fourfold or a twofold fine (Ex. 22: 1, 4), to those who confessed, one fifth part only was added to the amount stolen (Num. 5: 7). But Zaccheus wanted to punish himself for his sins, and to undo fully and freely all the evil he had done, which was often more than the mere amount of money taken. His act was the overflow of a repentant heart, not an arithmetical calculation. "You say if people are converted suddenly, they won't hold out. Zaccheus held out long enough to restore fourfold. We should like to have a work that reaches men's pockets. I can imagine one of his servants going to a neighbor next morning with a check for £100, and handing it over. 'What is this for?' 'Oh! my master defrauded you of £25 a few years ago, and this is restitution money.' That would give confidence in Zaccheus' conversion."—*D. L. Moody.*

VI. Salvation.—Vs. 9, 10. 9. This day is salvation come to this house. The publican was saved: saved from his past sins, saved from the punishment thereof, saved from his sinful character, to a new, true, holy, and heavenly life. He had given two proofs that he was saved; (1) repentance, confession, and restitution; (2) devotion of his property to God and man. In all probability, with the Lord's express sanction, he continued in his occupation, in order that he might set an example to others of his class, showing them that a calling which does not involve the commission of sin is a lawful one, and

10. For¹ the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

For the Son of man came 10 to seek and to save that which was lost.

¹ Matt. 18: 11.

may be pursued innocently and honestly; and in order that he might restrain those over whom he acted as chief from extortion and other crimes. — *Sadler*. Zaccheus did that which was much harder than to give up his business. For his honest example would shine with reproving light upon those who wished to do their business dishonestly, and they would hate, and injure, and slander him, and do everything possible to dim his light by trying to show that he was no better than others. This is continually done now. I have known it to be done to honest horse-car conductors and government workmen. **Forasmuch as he also is a son of Abraham.** This expression was probably used with a reference to the sneers of Pharisees against publicans and sinners, as being unworthy of eternal life. Our Lord declares that, however much the self-righteous Pharisee might despise Zaccheus, he was a genuine son of Abraham, if any one was. He was one by natural descent. But, better than that, he was a son of Abraham in a way the Pharisees were not. He walked in the steps of Abraham's faith and works, which they did not do. He was one in heart with Abraham as well as in blood. — *Ryle*.

10. For the Son of man is come to seek. We learn from this that, though Zaccheus seemed to seek the Lord to see him, yet the Lord was secretly seeking Zaccheus, both assisting and fostering the better thoughts which were taking possession of his soul, and also exciting his innocent desire so as to bring about his *Seeking the Lost*. **And to save that which was lost.** This was Jesus' work in the world, and it is the business of his church. The model church, or the model Sunday school, is not one made up of model persons, but one which seeks the lost, which attracts the bad and those who do not behave well; but it is always making them better. We are to seek men, not merely wait till they come.

NOTE. The fact that we are lost, and feel unworthy, is no reason why we should stay away from Christ, but rather proves that the invitation is to us.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

On sycamore trees see Geikie's *Holy Land*, I., 133-135; Thomson's *Land and Book*, New Ed., III., 113-116. There are some capital illustrations on this Lesson in J. R. Miller's *Practical Religion* (\$1.00), pp. 97, 266, 271; and in his *Week-Day Religion* (\$1.00), pp. 202, 233. An excellent sermon on Zaccheus is in Robertson's *Sermons*, Series I., "Triumph over Hindrances"; Talmage's *Sermons*, Series I., "Christ in the House"; Whitfield's *Sermons*, "Conversion of Zaccheus"; N. Adams' *Christ a Friend*, "Conversion of Zaccheus"; Dwight L. Moody's *Sermons*, "The Mission of Christ to the World"; G. Shephard's *Sermons*, "The Son of Man is Come to Seek and to Save."

PRACTICAL HELPS FROM ZACCHEUS.

1. V. 2. Where there is a will there is always a way. No one ever sought Christ sincerely who did not find him.

2. V. 4. The Christian should use every fair expedient for making up his natural deficiencies.

3. "We have often to drop dignity, if we want to get high enough above the mob to see the Lord; and a man afraid of being laughed at will stand a poor chance." — *MacLaren*.

4. "Reason is of a low stature, and cannot see the promise; we must ascend by faith: then, and not till then, will the soul see Jesus" (1 Cor. 1: 18-24; 1 Pet. 1: 8). — *Gurnall*.

5. Every man knows of places where he can put himself in the way of Christ, — as the house of God, the praying circle, the closet for secret prayer. Here Christ passes. How can any really *seek to see* Christ, who avoid or omit such natural and proper means? — *Jacobus*.

6. Many with fewest advantages accomplish most. The difficulties in the way are both tests and stepping stones upward.

7. Courage is required in the service of God. Zaccheus showed courage in his way of seeking Jesus; Jesus showed great courage in going to Zaccheus' house, contrary to a strong popular prejudice.

8. V. 5. It is a great blessing to have Jesus abide in our homes, as he did here and in Bethany.

9. V. 7. It is a sad thing for those who think themselves good to oppose the efforts to save the lost.

10. Out of great sinners Jesus can make great saints.

11. V. 8. The proofs of conversion are repentance, confession, restitution, and benevolence. "The reason why many a professed seeker finds no light or peace is the lack of Zaccheus's willingness to confess and make good the wrong practised. Such ought not to find light till they change."

12. V. 10. All sinners are lost: they do not know the way back to God and heaven.

13. Christ's coming to save the lost gives us all hope, not in remaining lost, but in yielding to him who seeks to save us.

14. We should, with him, seek after the lost and wandering ones. The Christian individual and the church are to gather in the lost, the lowest, the outcast.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

CONTRAST this rich man with the one in the last lesson.

NOTE how it illustrates Christ's saying that with God all things are possible.

FOLLOW the order and headings under Explanatory.

SUBJECT: A SINNER SAVED.

Illustrations. A SECOND CHANCE. (1) Jeremiah illustrates God's dealings with sinful Judea by going down to a pottery where a vessel on the potter's wheel was marred and ruined, but the potter, instead of throwing it away, made it into another vessel. The clay had a second chance. "Even in the ruins of a soul there are divine elements, and so long as even a fragment remains God wants to give it still another chance." "In Florence, one of the treasures of art admired by thousands of visitors is Michael Angelo's representation in marble of the young David. It is, indeed, a marvellous piece of sculpture. But the strangely winning thing in the story of that statue is that it was the stone's second chance. A sculptor began work on a noble piece of marble, but, lacking skill, he only hacked and marred the block. It was then abandoned as worthless and cast aside. For years it lay in a backyard, soiled and blackened, half hidden among the rubbish." Then Michael Angelo found it and transformed it into his beautiful statue. The marble had a second chance. So did Zaccheus.—From *J. R. Miller, in Westminster Teacher.*

Illustration of overcoming hindrances. A blind man, trampling on impossibilities, has explored the economy of the bee-hive, and, more wonderful still, lectured on the laws of light (note also Kitto and Milton). The timid stammerer, with pebbles in his mouth, and the roar of the sea-surge in his ear, has attained correctest elocution, and swayed as one man the changeful tides of the mighty masses of Athenian democracy.—*Robertson.*

Illustrations. Leigh Hunt's poem, "Abou Ben Ahdem" found in most collections of poems; J. R. Miller's *Practical Religion*, a poem, p. 266, and an illustration, p. 271, on "Beautiful Hands"; J. R. Miller's *Week-Day Religion* has a story on repentance from the Koran.

Illustrations. A black coal transformed into light and heat when touched with fire. A jewel rescued from the sewer.



David.

By Michael Angelo (Florence).

LESSON XII.—MARCH 24.

PURITY OF LIFE.—ROMANS 13: 8-14.

TEMPERANCE LESSON.

Golden Cert.—*Abstain from all appearance of evil.*—1 THESS. 5: 22. R. V., Abstain from every form of evil. (Margin, or, *appearance.*)

AUTHOR.—St. Paul.

DATE.—The spring of A.D. 58, toward the close of Paul's third great missionary journey.

PLACE. — Written at Corinth, toward the close of Paul's three months' residence there.

PLACE IN BIBLE HISTORY. — Paul was just about to leave Corinth for Jerusalem, bringing with him the contributions of the Gentile churches for the poor saints in Jerusalem (Acts 20: 2, 3; 1 Cor. 16: 6).

EXPLANATORY.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS. These verses when used as a Temperance Lesson suggest a

SERIES OF CONTRASTS

between the effects, on the one hand, of

THE LOVE OF GOD, on the other of INTemperance.

For a blackboard help, these two titles may be placed at the heads of two columns, and the divisions below be written in their appropriate places.

I. Love to One Another, Our Perpetual Debt. — V. 8. "The believer should keep no other debt in his life than that which a man can never discharge, the debt which is renewed and even grows in proportion as it is discharged; that of loving. In fact, the task of love is infinite. The more active love is, the more it seeks its task to enlarge; for, inventive as it is, it is ever discovering new objects for its activity." — *Godet*. Leave no debt undischarged, except "the undying debt of love" (Bengel), "which you must always owe, because this alone holds the debtor even after it has been discharged" (Augustine). "He loves not truly who loves for the purpose of ceasing from loving" (Philippi). — *American Commentary*.

APPLICATIONS TO TEMPERANCE. (1) The law of love requires us not to drink intoxicating liquors, because they injure ourselves, and whatever injures ourselves injures others.

(2) The law of love requires us not to sell to others intoxicating drinks, and not to aid others in the sale by furnishing capital, or renting buildings for the purpose. (3) The law of love requires us to do all we can to put down intemperance: (a) by our own example; (b) by temperance societies; (c) by efforts for the suppression of the traffic; (d) by contributing our money and our influence; (e) by personal consecration; (f) by temperance-teaching in day schools and Sunday schools.

INTemperance leads to those actions which express hatred to others. It is continually doing injury; it arouses bad passions against others; it renders the soul so selfish that a man will starve wife and children, neglect all good for the sake of gratifying his appetite. In its scales the drink outweighs the world.

ILLUSTRATION. THE RESULT OF OBSERVATION by Hon. Chauncey M. Depew, president of the New York Central R. R. Co., in a talk to railroad men. "Twenty-five years ago I knew every man, woman, and child in Peekskill. And it has been a study with me to mark boys who started in every grade of life with myself, to see what has become of them. I was up last fall and began to count them over, and it was an instructive exhibit. Some of them became clerks, merchants, manufacturers, lawyers, doctors. *It is remarkable that every one of those that drank is dead; not one living of my age.* Barring a few who were taken off by sickness, *every one that proved a wreck and wrecked his family did it from rum and no other cause.* Of those who are church-going people, who were steady, industrious, and hard-working men, who were frugal and thrifty, *every single one of them, without an exception, owns the house in which he lives and has something laid by, the interest on which, with his house, would carry him through many a rainy day.* When a man becomes debased with gambling, rum, or drink, he doesn't care; all his finer feelings are crowded out."

Ruin from Drinking Habit.

ILLUSTRATION. The other day it was discovered that there had been scattered around the village of Moravia, N. Y., boxes containing bottles of whiskey drugged with deadly poison. These boxes were labelled: "This box is one of several placed in various parts of this village for the purpose of furnishing a sure mode of suicide for those who prefer to die rather than face the present hard times any longer. If you are not tired of this world, let this box alone." This was signed "Philanthropist." Two men discovered one of these boxes, did not read the label, thought the fluid was whiskey and nothing else, drank it, and died in half an hour. The incident would make a good text for a temperance sermon. Every whiskey bottle furnishes material for a suicide, no less sure because it is slow. It would be well if every bottle of strong drink had upon it, in plain letters, precisely the label of these boxes in Moravia:

Read the Label.

8. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for ¹ he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.

9. For this, ² Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if *there be* any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

10. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love *is* the ³fulfilling of the law.

Owe no man anything, ⁸ save to love one another: for he that loveth (a) his neighbour hath fulfilled (b) the law.

For this, Thou shalt not ⁹ commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet, and if there be any other commandment, it is summed up in this word, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Love worketh no ill to his ¹⁰ neighbour: love therefore is the fulfilment of (c) the law.

¹v. 10. Gal. 5: 14. Col. 3: 14. ¹Tim. 1: 5. James 2: 8. ³Matt. 22: 40. (a) Gr., *the other*.
²Ex. 20: 13. Deut. 5: 17. Lev. 19: 18. Matt. 22: 39. Mark 12: 31. Gal. 5: 14. (b) Or, *law*. (c) Or, *law*.

"If you are not tired of this world, let this bottle alone." The firm-label, however, should be "Misanthropist." — *Golden Rule*.

II. **Love Fulfills the Law.** — Vs. 8-10. 8. He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. The law expresses in words what is the natural fruit of true love in the heart. Perfect love would prompt exactly those actions which the law commands.

9. For this, several commandments are named as examples. Briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour. On "who is my neighbour," see Luke 10: 25-37; Jas. 1: 27. — *Abbott*. "Our neighbor is every one whom we can help." This is quoted from Leviticus 19: 18, where it is the climax of a noble series of moral commands in the midst of the book of ceremonies. — *W. N. Clarke*.

THE MEASURE OF LOVE. As thyself. (1) Not as he *does* love himself, but as he *ought* to love himself. (2) After the same manner, *i. e.*, freely and readily, sincerely and unfeignedly, tenderly and compassionately, constantly and perseveringly. — *Burkitt*. Cases arise where man ought to love his neighbor more than his life, — physical life, — and has done so, sacrificing it for his fellows, his country, and the church, in imitation of the example of Christ and the martyrs. — *Schaff*. This love is the principle in the heart from which flows the Golden Rule in practice, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" (Matt. 7: 12). "It is well said by Kant that the precept 'Love thy neighbor as thyself' does not contemplate merely doing our neighbor good in consequence of our inward affection for him, but it looks to our acquiring the affection for him by doing him good." — *The Sunday-School Times*.

10. Love worketh no ill, etc. As love delights in the happiness of its object, it effectually prevents us from injuring those we love, and consequently leads us to fulfil all the law requires, because the law requires nothing which is not conducive to the best interests of our fellowmen. — *Dr. Hodge*.

INTEMPERANCE tends to the exact opposite of all this. It leads men to break every commandment, and to work ill of every kind to their neighbors.

Illustration. "A story is current in the Orient of a wise old sheik, who gave to a young Arab prince, from whom he was about to part, a list of crimes, and bade him choose the one which seemed least harmful. The young prince turned in horror from murder, theft, and loss of virtue, and told the patriarch he would choose intemperance. 'You have chosen that,' said the wise old man, 'which will bring you all.'"

A Source of All Crimes.

BURNING WORDS OF ADVICE. "Had I 10,000,000 tongues and a throat for each tongue, I would say to every man, woman, and child here to-night: Throw strong drink aside as you would an ounce of liquid hell. It sears the conscience, it destroys everything it touches. It reaches into the family circle and takes the wife you had sworn to protect, and drags her down from her purity into that house from which no decent woman ever goes alive. It induces the father to take the furniture from his house, exchange it for money at the pawnshop, and spend the proceeds in rum. It damns everything it touches. I have seen it in every city east of the Mississippi River, and I know that *the most damning curse to the laborer* is that which gurgles from the neck of the bottle. I had rather be at the head of an organization having 100,000 temperate, honest, earnest men than at the head of an organization of 12,000,000 drinkers, whether moderate or any other kind. Every dime spent in the

A Damning Curse.

11. And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time ¹ to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed.

12. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: ² let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and ³ let us put on the armor of light.

And this, knowing the 11 season, that now it is high time for you to awake out of sleep: for now is (d) salvation nearer to us than when we first believed.

The night is far spent, and 12 the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

¹ 1 Cor. 15: 34. Eph. 5: 14. 1 Thess. 5: 5, 6.

² Eph. 5: 11. Col. 3: 8.

³ Eph. 6: 13.

1 Thess. 5: 8.

(d) Or, *our salvation nearer than when, etc.*

rumshop furnishes a paving stone for hell. In one Pennsylvania county in a single year, \$17,000,000 was spent for liquor, and it was estimated that \$11,000,000 of the amount came from workmen." — *T. V. Powderly, at the head of the Knights of Labor.*

III. **Awakening to Righteousness.** — V. 11. And that, knowing the time, the nature and character of the period in which we now live. — *Hodge.* This is interpreted by the clause, **for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.** They themselves were nearer the goal, nearer to Christ, nearer to their immortal inheritance than when they first became Christians; and their cause was nearer its triumph; the kingdom of God had made great progress. It was a time of warfare, a time of hope, with goal and the crown in sight, a time for new zeal in the Lord's work, a time when every gift and every labor told on the result, a time of crisis and turning points. **It is high time to awake out of sleep.** Sleep is the condition of indifference, of **Awake, Awake.** unconsciousness of these great opportunities and inspirations. The sleeper does not know what is going on in the great world of realities, but is either dead to all these things, or has a dream world of his own in which he lives for the time.

Illustration. A man coming late at night to a hotel was, without his knowing it, put into an inside room. Waking up, it was still dark. He looked at his watch and found that it was ten o'clock, and yet the sun had not risen to him. At length he found out that the darkness was with him, in his closed room, but the real world had been awake and busy for hours.

INTEMPERANCE dulls the moral nature. It puts the soul to sleep. It keeps men from the great invisible realities of life. It shuts their eyes to the dangers and evils of strong drink.

It is high time for the whole people to awake out of sleep on this subject, to realize the dangers to society, to arouse from lethargy, and work for the good cause. For the day of salvation from intemperance is nearer than when we first joined the ranks of the total abstinence army.

Illustration. A young man once asked Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes a series of questions as to what he would advise young men to do. One of these the doctor answered in this way: "Shall he smoke? Certainly not. **Shall He Smoke?** It is liable to injure the sight, to render the nerves unsteady, to enfeeble the will, and enslave the nature to an imperious habit likely to stand in the way of duty to be performed. Yours very truly." — *O. W. Holmes.*

Illustration. I once asked the greatest of inventors, Thomas A. Edison, if he were a total abstainer; and when he told me that he was, I said, "May I inquire whether it was home influence that made you so?" and he replied, "No, I think it was because I always felt that I had a better use for my head." Who can measure the loss to the world if that wonderful instrument of thought that has given us so much of light and leading in the practical mechanism of life had become sodden with drink, instead of electric with original ideas? — *Frances E. Willard.*

The Armor of Light. — Vs. 12, 13. 12. The night, of past ignorance, of sin, of the kingdom of darkness, this is far spent, the day is at hand, the day of the kingdom of God rising upon the world, the dawn of redemption for the world. Its rays tinge the clouds of the morning, and touch the mountain tops. The view, "on the whole, to be preferred, is that which refers 'the night' to the season of pagan ignorance, immorality, and wretchedness, in which the Romans had formerly been living; and 'the day' to the season of Christian knowledge, purity, and happiness, which had begun to dawn upon them, and which was destined to grow brighter and brighter. We must remember that they were living in the transition

The Night.

13. ¹ Let us walk honestly, as in the day; ² not in rioting and drunkenness, not in ³ chambering and wantonness, ⁴ not in strife and envying:

14. But ⁵ put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

Let us walk honestly, as ¹ in the day; not in revelling and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and jealousy.

But put ye on the Lord ¹⁴ Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to *fulfil* the lusts *thereof*.

¹ Phil. 4: 8. ¹ Thess. 4: 12. ¹ Pet. 2: 12.
² Prov. 23: 20. Luke 21: 34. ¹ Pet. 4: 3.

³ 1 Cor. 6: 9. Eph. 5: 5.
⁴ James 3: 14.

⁵ Gal. 3: 27. Eph. 4: 24.

period, when the light of Christianity was struggling successfully with the darkness of pagan idolatry." "The saints in Rome *knew* that they, in common with mankind in general, were entering upon a bright 'day of Christian knowledge, purity, and happiness.' They also *knew* that life was but a vapor, and that the day of 'their deliverance from this present evil world, and introduction into the purity and blessedness of heaven' (Hodge), was at hand." — *Albert N. Arnold, D. D.* Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, such as are described in the next verse, all the deeds of evil which hate the light, which are ashamed of their own faces in the light of righteousness, which darken the world wherever they rule, whose end is eternal darkness and despair. And let us put on the armor of light. The armor which belongs to those who live in and for the light, and are warring against the deeds of darkness. "In Ephesians 6: 11, 13 we are exhorted to put on the panoply of God, the whole armor which God has provided for every part of the Christian's person, except his back; for, as Bunyan remarks: 'The Christian has no armor for his back.'" — *Dr. Arnold.* The Christian is never to turn his back upon the enemy and retreat. Like the Highland piper, he does not know how to play a retreat.

13. Let us walk, live, honestly, becomingly, in a manner worthy of our vocation. As in the day, in an open way which we are willing all should see and know.

INTEMPERANCE puts on the armor of darkness. Its deeds are deeds of darkness. It tends to the evils mentioned here.

WORKERS FOR TEMPERANCE need the armor of light, with no defence for the back, for they cannot turn their backs to the foe. Especially must all strife and envying be avoided, but self be lost in the great cause.

V. Putting on Christ. — V. 14. Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ. The putting on, or clothing ourselves with another person, "is a strong expression, denoting the complete assumption of the nature, etc., of another." — *Ellicott.* "Christ put on man in nature and condition: man should put on Christ in disposition and character. He became partaker of our physical nature. We should become partakers of his moral nature. Christ put on man, that man might put on Christ." — *J. Brown.* "The robe of righteousness which Christ gives us is a medicated robe, which cures the sores which it covers, which heals while it hides." — *Alexander de Stourdsa.* This word, put on, is elsewhere used with reference to the moral disposition of our Lord, and the Christian virtues and graces. (See Gal. 3: 27; Eph. 4: 24; Col. 3: 10, 12; 1 Pet. 5: 5.) Make not provision, etc. "We may provide for the flesh, but not for the exciting and gratifying of its lusts. We owe a duty to our bodies which, though the seat of unlawful desires, are yet consecrated to God as temples of his Spirit, and consequently we owe a duty to the flesh, the living material of which these bodies are composed. This passage, beginning with verse 11, was the means of awakening Augustine, and of his conversion from a dissolute to a holy life." (See Augustine's Confessions, VIII., 12, 28, 29.) — *Rev. D.B. Ford.*

INTEMPERANCE puts off Christ and his character, and employs itself in making provision for the lusts of the flesh.

THE POWER that will overcome it is that of Christ. Temperance workers will succeed by putting on Christ, having his character, his teachings, his power.

"The world wants *men* — large-hearted manly men;
Men who shall join its chorus, and prolong
The psalm of labor and the psalm of love.
The age wants *heroes* — heroes who shall dare
To struggle in the solid ranks of truth;
To clutch the monster error by the throat;
To bear opinion to a loftier seat;
To blot the error of oppression out,
And lead a universal freedom in.
And heaven wants *souls* — fresh and capacious souls,
To taste its raptures, and expand, like flowers,

Beneath the glory of its central sun.
It wants fresh souls — not lean and shrivelled ones;
It wants fresh souls, my brother — *give it thine*,
If thou indeed wilt be what scholars should;
If thou wilt be a hero, and wilt strive
To help thy fellow and exalt thyself,
Thy feet, at last, shall stand on jasper floors;
Thy heart, at last, shall seem a thousand hearts —
Each single heart with myriad raptures filled —
While thou shalt sit with princes and with kings,
Rich in the jewel of a ransomed soul."

LESSON XIII. — MARCH 31.

REVIEW.

Golden Text. — *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me.* — **MATT. 11: 29.**

GENERAL REVIEW.

Birth of Christ.	B.C. 5. Dec.	Bethlehem.
Childhood and youth. Visit to the temple.	A.D. 9.	30 Years Chiefly at Nazareth.
Baptism. The Holy Spirit. The Temptation.	A.D. 27. Jan.	Preparations.
I. YEAR OF BEGINNINGS.		
First Disciples. First Miracle. First Reform. First Discourse. First Tour (Judea). First Samaritan Disciple. First Work of Galilean Ministry.	A.D. 27.	Recorded chiefly by John. Judea. ERAS { 1 Disciples. 2 Miracles. 3 Reform. 4 Doctrine. 5 Missions.
II. YEAR OF DEVELOPMENT.		
EPOCHS. 1. Choosing Apostles. 2. Principles. 3. Opposition. 4. New Teaching by Parables. 5. Home Mission. 6. Miracles illustrating the Gospel.	A.D. 28.	Galilee. The Great Galilean Ministry A Year and Four Months. Recorded chiefly by Matthew, Mark, and Luke.
III. YEAR OF TEACHING AND WORKING.		
EPOCHS. 1. Christ the bread of life. 2. New ideas of Christ as the Suffering Saviour. 3. The glorious nature of Christ (Transfiguration). 4. The children's Saviour 5. The way to eternal life.	A.D. 29.	Galilee and Surrounding Districts in all four Gospels.
IV. LAST MONTHS OF PUBLIC MINISTRY.		
6. Christ the light of men. 7. Christ the life of men.	A.D. 30. Jan. to Apr.	Perea and Judea.

WE should briefly review the whole life of Christ up to this time, as well as the year under special consideration.

KEEP the different portions in mind, with the dates.

NOTE how long was the period of preparation (thirty years) for three and one half years of work.

NOTE how much more full the report of Christ's life grows with each added year.

THE EPOCHS or steps in the development of the work and kingdom of Jesus should be kept distinctly in mind.

LEARN THIS by heart, so that each event of the life of Christ may find its place and be instructive, not only in itself, but in its relations to the whole life and mission of our Saviour.

WORD PICTURE
REVIEW.

Nearly all the lessons of this Quarter can be reviewed in this way: the teacher drawing a word picture of the different events, and the scholars guessing what is described, and locating it both in time and place. Or to each scholar may be assigned some incident to be described, which the others guess.

PROGRESSIVE REVIEW.

Rev. E. Blakeslee, in his *Teacher's Manual* for his *Studies in the Life of Christ*, makes some excellent suggestions for a review, which can best be begun with the beginning of the quarter, and carried out gradually to the end. He proposes that each scholar, or the class as a whole, make a harmony of the life of Christ from the Gospels, and illustrating it with unmounted photographs, which can easily be obtained of dealers. "Many persons have done this work with very great satisfaction, and by the use of maps cut out of books and papers or drawn by themselves, unmounted photographs, and other illustrations, have made most valuable and attractive books. In making such a book, the best plan is to use sheets of heavy paper, stiff enough not to be wrinkled by the paste, and then to bind them into book form, or tie them loosely together after they are finished. The best paper for this purpose is unruled writing paper, such as is used for ledgers, and which can be procured at any stationer's. The paper should be cut into sheets about nine and one half by twelve inches in size, which will give ample room to insert the parallel passages side by side, and

for marginal notes." Classes have often united in making such a harmony; not only by contributing toward its expense, but also by coming together occasionally to do the work. The growth of such a harmony under one's own hand and eye adds very much to his familiarity with the Gospels, and to his interest in their presentation of the life of Christ. I know a lady who, for her children, has bought an unbound copy of the Bible, and inserts the photographs, etc., fastened on sheets of the same size as the pages, in their places in the Gospels.

REVIEW BY PLACES.

In this quarter's lessons, the events are located in various places in Palestine, and a review by places and travels can be made very effective and interesting. It may be done in one or several of the different ways described below, by the superintendent for the whole school, by the teacher in his class, or as a public concert exercise.

I. PLACES AND ILLUSTRATIVE OBJECTS.

In the bright little paper, the *Child's Hour*, published by Wilde & Co., Boston, I found the following capital plan for studying the geography of the United States, which can easily be adapted to the life of Christ.

"The map was of the United States, and the products of the different parts of the country were laid in the right places. There was a bit of coal for Pennsylvania and Ohio, wheat along the Mississippi Valley, copper near Lake Superior, and gold in California.

"Another way to make a 'product map' is to cut out the separate States from a large railroad map, or an old atlas, and as you study about each one, paste it on a large sheet of stiff paper, and fasten on the things which will show the industries and productions of that region.

"Here is an account, written by a teacher who has tried it, of such a map. She says: 'On the day for the study of Maine the map of said State should be pasted on upper right-hand corner of the paper. Several boys will, doubtless, be found to volunteer to whittle out a tiny boat, which should be cut in two in the length, leaving a flat surface for attaching to the ocean southeast of Maine. Toothpick masts, paper sails, and flag complete the matter, and the children have learned that shipbuilding is an occupation of Maine, and most heartily enjoyed the lesson. Rafts of lumber formed of tiny twigs, held together by headless pins, float merrily down the Penobscot; and whatever products are to be taught are gummed to the face of the map.

"'When New Hampshire is taken up, it is carefully joined to Maine, and so on, one by one, till the Union is complete.

"'Beeswax forms an excellent substitute for butter rolls. Tiny cheeses can be cut out with a tin penholder. Animal crackers or 'Noah's Ark animals' represent the brute creation. The children's power of invention in furnishing sacks of flour, cotton bales, etc., will prove very amusing. Petroleum, turpentine, molasses, and salt can be put into very small homœopathic bottles, the bottles tied to a tiny square of pasteboard, and the board glued to the map.

"'All products which require any time or invention to prepare can be saved from year to year, thus making all maps after the first very easy of construction.'"

In some such way we can study Christ's life and travels in Palestine; a ship for the sea of Galilee; a well for Shechem; a temple for Jerusalem, and a small roll of the law; a cradle and a star for Bethlehem, and a grain of wheat to show that Ruth lived there; a dove where Jesus was baptized; sands for the wilderness of temptation; a cup for Cana; a carpenter's tool for Nazareth.

II. JOURNEYS WITH JESUS.

"If the lessons have been of a historical or narrative character, a very satisfactory method of review is to call for the places which have been mentioned in the quarter's lessons. Pointing out the place upon the school map, pin (over the place) its initial letter cut out of some bright-colored paper, and then call for the connected persons, events, and truths." — *Sunday-School Times*.

In *Tom Brown at Oxford*, the best scholar is represented as studying his Greek history by means of a map and pins with large heads made of differently colored sealing-wax. The red-headed pin represented one army, the black another. And as the text described the movements of the armies, the pins were moved to the places designated on the map. Dur-

ing the late war several of us ministers did the same thing with the various armies. When news came of any change we marked it with the pins. This plan gives great vividness to the history and assists the memory. Suppose now that we have a large map on the wall. Prepare a pin with a large sealing-wax head to represent Jesus. Smaller pins can represent the disciples and John. Take the initial letters of the principal places, printed on cardboard, so as to be seen across the room, and with a pin fasten them in their proper places on the map as fast as the journey is made. Some scholar or class can tell where the next movement is to be made, and all the events or incidents clustering around each place can be noted or described. Pins with fliers of one color may represent miracles; another color denotes parables. Thus, in a brief time, the class or the school may travel over Palestine with Jesus, and become familiar with his life.

III. A CANDLE REVIEW.

The *Lesson Illustrator*, speaking of a review of Paul's missionary journey, suggests a method that can be adapted to the Life of Christ. "One of the best methods for reviewing the lesson on Paul's missionary journeys is to have a wall map drawn on paper or muslin. Provide little candles, such as are used for Christmas-tree illumination, and place them on the map at the places where Paul labored, by means of a piece of sharpened tin or wire. Then with a larger candle or spirit lamp to represent the missionary, light the smaller candles in order, as the places and incidents of the journey are noted. By the aid of candles of different colors the review of the three journeys of Paul can be briefly made. As the broad belt of light covers the map the truths of the lesson will be burned into the minds and hearts of the pupils." We can thus show how Jesus lighted up Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Egypt, Nazareth, Bethabara, Cana, and what rays shine for us from these places.

IV. REVIEW BY PERSONS.

Another method of review is to associate events and teachings with the principal persons concerning whom we have studied. The persons are the real power of the history. If we know what they did, we know the history. Such persons are Jesus, John the Baptist, the disciples, especially Peter, James, and John, the blind man, Lazarus, Mary and Martha, Zaccheus, the rich young ruler. Or we may "call for the names of all the good men and the bad men to whom the lessons referred, and then, arranging upon the blackboard the names as announced, under the respective headings, evil-doers and well-doers, call for the reasons why they have been classed as they are."

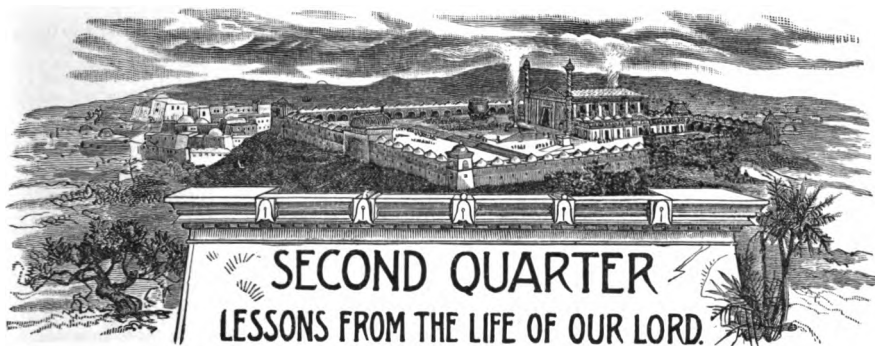
V. REVIEW BY PICTURES.

STEREOPTICON. A most interesting review can be made by a series of stereopticon pictures, of which there are many connected with the life of Christ. Professor Bickmore, of the Metropolitan Museum of New York, had a most successful series of meetings last winter with stereopticon pictures in connection with the lessons. Any dealer will furnish a list.

UNMOUNTED PHOTOGRAPHS can easily be obtained, which can be used in connection with each lesson and afterwards for the review; or they can be used for review alone. Several classes might club together in buying them. An interleaved Bible made in this way is excellent. Some of the best on this quarter are:—

Death of John the Baptist. — *Van der Weyden*.
Salome with Head of John. — *Titian*.
Feeding the Five Thousand. — *Murillo*.
Feeding the Five Thousand. — *Doré*.
Jesus the Bread of Life. — *Ploekhorst*.
The Transfiguration. — *Raphael*.
Blessing Little Children. — *Ploekhorst*.

Blessing Little Children. — *Theirsch*.
The Good Samaritan. — *Siemenroth*.
The Light of the World. — *Holman Hunt*.
The Raising of Lazarus. — *Piombo*.
The Home of Mary and Martha. — *Hofmann*.
The Rich Young Ruler. — *Hofmann and Bida*.
Eating with the Publicans. — *Bida*.



LESSON I. — APRIL 7.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY. — MARK 11: 1-11.

Golden Cert.—*Hosanna: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.* — MARK 11: 9. *Last Week of Christ's Life.*

THE SECTION includes Mark 11: 1-18, and the **Sunday.**
PARALLEL ACCOUNTS, Matthew 21: 1-17; Luke 19: 29-48; John 12: 12-19.

TIME. — Sunday, April 2, A. D. 30, just before the Passover.

THE COURSE OF THE STORY. — In our last regular lesson Jesus had gone to the house of Zaccheus. There he spoke the parable of the pounds. Note the place in the OUTLINE, page 6.

FRIDAY, March 31. Jesus went from Jericho to Bethany, John 12: 1.

SATURDAY, April 1. (The Jewish Sabbath.) Many Jews visited Jesus at Bethany (John 12: 9-11) and in the evening, after that Sabbath was ended, Jesus was at a supper in the house of Simon, and was anointed by Mary. (This follows the order of John. Dr. Broadus, following Matthew and Mark, places this supper on Wednesday.)

SUNDAY, April 2 (their first week day), was the triumphal entry. Being just before the Passover, great multitudes were thronging to the Holy City.

THE SCENE is on the west slope of the Mount of Olives, toward Jerusalem from Bethany; then in the streets of Jerusalem, and in the court of the temple.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Bēth'āny; Bēth'phāgē ("g" soft); Hōsān'ă.

1. And ¹ when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples.

And when they draw nigh ¹ unto Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth two of his disciples, and saith

¹ Matt. 21: 1. Luke 19: 29. John 12: 14.

EXPLANATORY.

(This Whole Story is Pictured before us in a Series of Vivid Scenes.)

SCENE I. Preparations for the Triumphal Entry. — Vs. 1-6. 1. And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, from Jericho. Mark omits a number of events, and simply states that Jesus had now almost reached his destination, Jerusalem. **Unto Bethphage** (*house of figs*, or *fig-town*), a small village not far from Bethany (*house of dates*) which was a village nearly two miles east from Jerusalem, the home of Lazarus, Martha, and Mary. It was on the eastern slope of the mount of Olives, so called from the ample orchards of olive trees upon it. "It was their open ground for pleasure, for worship; the 'Park' of Jerusalem; the thoroughfare of any going or coming in the direction of the great Jordan valley." — Stanley. He sendeth forth two of his disciples. Very likely Peter and John, as hereafter in Luke 22: 8. — Broadus.

2. And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

3. And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

4. And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

5. And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

6. And they said unto them, even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

7. And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

unto them, Go your way into the village that is over against you: and straightway as ye enter into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon no man ever yet sat; loose him, and bring him.

And if any one say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye, The Lord hath need of him; and straightway he (a) will send him (b) back hither.

And they went away, and found a colt tied at the door without in the open street; and they loose him.

And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

And they said unto them even as Jesus had said: and they let them go.

And they bring the colt unto Jesus, and cast on him their garments; and he sat upon him.

(a) Gr., *sendeth*.

(b) Or, *again*.

2. Go your way into the village (Bethphage) over against you: and probably then in sight. — *Andrews*. Coming from Bethany by the Jericho road (toward Jerusalem), in about a quarter of an hour we come to a gorge, across which — down steep, across, and steep up again — there is, and always must have been, a foot-path for those who wish to make a short cut. But the main road curves around the end of the gorge, making a circuit, or way round (v. 4), meeting the short cut just mentioned very near the traditional site of Bethphage, where the ruins have recently been found. The two disciples would cross the gorge by the foot-path, while the main company kept the regular road. — *Prof. Isaac Hall*, in *Sunday-School Times*. Ye shall find a colt: an ass's colt, the mother being with it (Matt. 21: 2). Tied: by a gate or door in the open road. In the East the ass is in high esteem. Statelier, livelier, swifter than with us, it vies with the horse in favor. — *Geikie*. The rich man's ass is a lordly beast. In size he is far ahead of anything of this kind we see here at home. His coat is as smooth and glossy as a horse's. His livery is shiny black, satiny white, or sleek mouse color. — *Zinck's Egypt*. Whereon never man sat, significant of the fact that Jesus took no other man's place.

3. And if any man say unto you: as the owner or his friends at hand would be likely to do if any one should undertake to lead the animal away. Say ye that the Lord hath need of him. The Lord God, and the Lord Jesus. The account leads to the inference that the owner of the ass was an adherent of Jesus, who had perhaps not yet declared himself. The number of such secret followers was probably very large. — *Cambridge Bible*. And straightway he will send him hither. (1) He will give permission to the disciples to take him. Jesus and his disciples had passed along this road so many times that doubtless the owners knew them well and could trust them; or (2) The R. v. translates, and straightway he (Jesus) will send him back hither. "The idea is not, as commonly understood, that the owners will at once give up the animal, but a promise that the Lord would, without delay, return the animal." — *Morison*.

4. Found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met: or, as in R. v., at a door without, in the open street. The original word means a winding way, a way around a place; probably because the street wound about the village, as described above under verse 2.

5. And certain of them that stood there: the owners among them (Luke). Said unto them, What do ye, etc., what are you going to do with the colt, what authority have you?

6. And they let them (the two disciples) go: or let them alone, to do what they wished. — *Schaff*.

SCENE II. The Prince of Peace. — V. 7. And they brought the colt to Jesus. This was the only time recorded that Jesus rode. And cast their garments on him: instead of a saddle, as is frequently done by the rider himself to-day; but for the people of the company to do it was an act of high and honorable regard. — *Professor Hall*. An animal to be ridden by a monarch was often covered with splendid cloths. — *Broadus*.

8. And ¹ many spread their garments in the way; and others cut down branches off the trees, and strewed *them* in the way.

And many spread their garments upon the way; and others (c) branches, which they had cut from the fields.

¹ Matt. 21: 8.

(c) Gr., *layers of leaves.*

THE OBJECT of this riding into Jerusalem was to set forth as in a living parable that Jesus was the Messiah, the expected king, and to present himself to the Jews for their acceptance. It was the final offer to those who had rejected him as a teacher, that they might accept him as the Messiah, and save themselves and their nation from destruction. (1) *Jesus Presents Himself as the Messiah.* He came as a king, but not on a war-horse, heralded by trumpets and clad in gorgeous array, for that would have caused the Jews to misunderstand the nature of his kingdom as if it were of this world, and would, as Dr. Gibson says, "have raised the standard of revolt against the Romans, and been the signal for tumult, bloodshed, and disastrous war." But he rode in the simplest fashion on an ass, the symbol of peace. (2) He came in the way foretold 600 years before by the prophets that the Messiah would come (Luke 24: 25-27, 46; Isa. 62: 11; Zech. 9: 9). He filled the place and did the deeds of the Messiah expected by the Jews. Was the chief motive of Jesus merely to fulfil a prophecy, and did he turn out of the way *Prophecy Fulfilled.* for this purpose? Rather, let us see that this was THE RIGHT THING TO DO at this time. It was necessary for his mission to offer himself, on this last opportunity, to the Jews as their Messiah King, so that they might accept him and be saved. It was necessary to reveal to his disciples and to the people his kingly nature, his kingly right, and to give a foregleam of his triumph over the world. *Therefore* this event was *prophesied*, and therefore it was *accomplished*. The prophecy and the fulfilment having the same purpose in view. (3) He was kingly in his nature. He showed royal authority in taking for his use what was necessary, as kings were accustomed to do, but only temporarily, what his subjects freely and gladly yielded to his use. His claim to be the Messiah "is the most stupendous claim that could be made. To be the Messiah is to be God's viceroy and representative on earth, able to represent God adequately to men, and to bring about that perfect condition which is named 'the kingdom of God.' The Messiah must be conscious of ability perfectly to accomplish the will of God with man, and to bring men into absolute harmony with God." — *Marcus Dods*. He had the true kingly spirit — pure, noble, holy; a spirit, not of pride, but of lowliness; not of exultation, but of daily service and helpfulness; sanctifying and exalting common things; not afar off in seclusion, but near the people; not receiving from the people, but giving to them, full of compassion, the King of Love. (4) He was the Prince of Peace. His methods were moral, not physical. "Truth is his sceptre, love, his force." "Jesus came to bring peace into all the world by righteousness. His reign will bring peace into the soul now a troubled seat of war, into the community so often arrayed in contending factions; between nations, and everywhere; peace which passes understanding and which flows like a river." — *Morison*.

SCENE III. *The Royal Welcome.* — Vs. 8-10. 8. And many. In Matthew, *a very great multitude*; crowds from the city (John 12: 12), and crowds of pilgrims from all parts thronging into the city by the Jericho road. By a census taken in the time of Nero, it was ascertained that there were 2,700,000 Jews present at the Passover. Being visitors, they would have abundant leisure for any procession or excitement. *Spread their garments*: the loose blankets or cloaks worn over the tunic or shirt. *In the way*. Thus manifesting, extemporizingly, their high idea of our Lord. It was customary, in royal processions, to spread decorative cloth, or carpet, upon the ground, that the feet of royalty might not be defiled, or that dust might not arise. — *Morison*. "Lowly though his procession was, yet it was palpably a royal one. When Jehu was proclaimed king at Ramoth-Gilead, the captains hastened to make him sit upon the garments of every one of them, expressing by this national symbol their subjection. Somewhat the same feeling is in the famous anecdote of Sir Walter Raleigh and Queen Elizabeth" (see *Illustration*). — *Chadwick*.

CASTING GARMENTS BEFORE THE LORD. As these people cast their garments before Jesus as he rode in triumph, so we should cast our talents, our money, our time, all that we have, before him, and do all that we can to aid his cause, and hasten his success. It is a great privilege to have part in his triumph.

"Ride on triumphantly; behold, we lay
Our lusts and proud wills in thy way."

9. And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying,¹ Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

10. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord:² Hosanna in the highest.

And they that went before, and they that followed cried, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

Blessed is the kingdom that cometh, the kingdom of our father David: Hosanna in the highest.

¹ Psa. 118: 26.

² Psa. 148: 1.

And others cut down branches off the trees. The idea is, that the people kept cutting down and spreading branches, twigs, or fronds. It was a simple and interesting mode of decorating the road, and manifesting respect, corresponding to the scattering of flowers, which continues to be a custom in our own and other lands. — *Morison*. Matthew, Mark, and John use each a different word for branches. Matthew, a word meaning a young slip, or shoot; a twig as related to a branch. Mark, a word meaning a litter of branches and leaves cut from the fields near by; a mass of straw, rushes, or leaves beaten together, or strewed loose, so as to form a bed, or a carpeted way. John, strictly palm branches, the feathery fronds forming the tufted crown of the tree. — *M. R. Vincent in Word Studies*. The palm branches which John mentions are the long leaves of the date palm, often ten feet long, which to this day are a regular feature in all decorations of the country. — *Professor Hall*.

The Procession.

9. And they that went before, and they that followed. Two vast streams of people met on that day. The one poured out from the city, and, as they came through the gardens whose clusters of palm rose on the southeastern corner of Olivet, they cut down the long branches, and moved upward toward Bethany with shouts of welcome. From Bethany streamed forth the crowds who had assembled there the previous night. The two streams met midway. Half of the vast mass, turning round, preceded; the other half followed. — *Stanley*. Cried. The tense implies a continuance or repetition of the cries. There were shouts of rejoicing and praise with a loud voice for all the mighty works the people had seen (Luke). Among them were those who had seen Lazarus raised from the dead. We get a better idea of the scene by putting together the manifold words of praise as reported by the different evangelists. "Hosanna," "Hosanna to the son of David," "Blessed is he . . . Blessed is the King . . . Hosannas. Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."

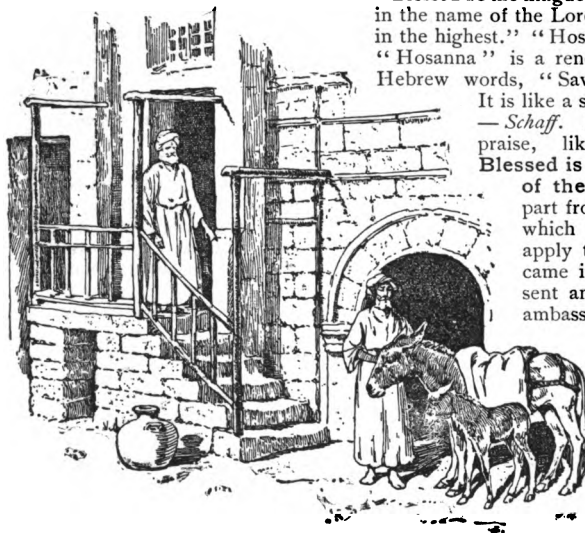
"Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh in the name of the Lord." "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest." "Hosanna in the highest." Hosanna. "Hosanna" is a rendering into Greek letters of the Hebrew words, "Save, we pray!" (Psa. 118: 25).

It is like a shout of "Salvation! Salvation!"

— *Schaff*. It is used as an expression of praise, like "Hallelujah," or "Hail."

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. The words are taken in part from Psalms 118: 25, 26, a hymn which the people were accustomed to apply to the Messiah. — *Godet*. Christ came in the name of the Lord, because sent and appointed by the Lord, — his ambassador, proclaiming the message of the Lord.

10. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh. (Better as in the R. V.) This recognizes clearly that Christ's kingdom is the continuation of the old kingdom of God's people, whose glories are prophesied so often in the Old Testament. Hosanna in the highest. In the highest



Foal of an Ass.

degree; in the highest strains; in the highest heavens. "The expression is, strictly speaking, a prayer that what is set forth in the word 'hosanna' may be ratified and confirmed in heaven."—*Pres. Timothy Dwight.*

ENTHUSIASM FOR CHRIST. We are accustomed to say that this same multitude, who on Sunday shouted Hosanna, cried "Crucify him!" on the following Friday; that "the whole enthusiasm of the multitude at the end is nothing more than the last upstreaming brilliancy of an evening sun before it vanishes beneath the horizon." But when we say that a city votes "no license" one year, and "license" the next, we do not mean that the same persons to any extent voted on opposite sides. Richard Glover is doubtless near the truth when he says, "The whole of that enthusiasm was not excitement. If most of the glad voices were silenced by the cross, very few, if any of them, took up the other cry, 'Crucify him!' Doubtless many of those who sang hosanna that day asked at Pentecost, 'What must I do to be saved?' and were among the first believers." "This story," says Dr. Robinson, "proves Christ's *fitness to evoke religious enthusiasm*. It is a frightful mistake to suppose, and a wilful perversion to assert, that Christianity, as a scheme of faith, is tame, insipid, and lifeless." There never has been anything on God's earth so adapted to kindle all the enthusiasm of the soul, and to make it an enduring flame. Blessed are they who have felt and continue to feel a deep, abiding, glowing enthusiasm for Christ and his gospel.

SCENE IV. A Vision.—In spirit we can see accompanying him, like the invisible twelve legions of angels that were ready at his call, or the unseen armies that surrounded Elisha at Dothan, the vast multitude of those whom he had healed and saved,—those whom he had raised from the dead, those from whom he had cast out devils, the blind he had made to see, and the lame that now walked, the lepers he had cleansed, those who had been delivered from the bondage of sin. *The Invisible Procession.* age of their sins and brought into the light of the gospel, and all the angels who sang at his birth and rejoice when a sinner is brought to repentance. Not all of earth's monarchs together could have summoned such a train of followers. What a picture this would make for an artist who would fill the air around and above the actual procession with these persons, as the space around Raphael's picture of the infant Jesus is filled with a cloud of angel faces.

SCENE V. The Triumphal Procession through the Ages.—Jesus riding in this triumphal procession was an object lesson, a living parable, setting forth his triumphal march down the ages. "All the ideas that were incarnated in his career and emblazoned in his final sufferings, and death, and resurrection are destined to be triumphant."—*Morrison.* Palm Sunday also prefigured the entire history of the church here below. The history of the church is the march of the glorified Lord Jesus across continents and centuries. He advances on the earth as on the road to Jerusalem, with the calm majesty of a sovereign; he takes possession of things and of men; he makes them his instruments and his servants, just as on Palm Sunday he used the ass which did not belong to him, and drew forth a glorious homage from all those mouths which on that day had no voice but for him. Saluted by the songs of all the churches in all the countries where his name is known, advancing from nation to nation, he marches towards the final domination of the whole world. —*Prof. Frederic Godet, in Sunday-School Times.* Commerce, railroads, printing presses, inventions, wealth, civilization are aiding his triumph, paving his way, and advancing his glory. All are cast down before him in his onward march. And all the redeemed, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, are singing his hosannas, and joining in the song, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5: 12, 13). *The Song of Triumph.*

SCENE VI. Sorrow and Rejoicing.—Luke 19: 41-44. As they sweep around the shoulder of the Mount of Olives, the glories of Jerusalem in all its splendor burst upon Jesus' view. "It rose terrace upon terrace, a city of palaces, with frowning towers and magnificent gardens," and before all the golden dome of the temple. Here, though others shouted, his own soul was full of sorrow, and he wept over the city, not because he knew that there his throne would be a cross, and the hosannas mockeries, but (1) on account of the sins of its people; (2) because of the sorrows and desolation that were to come upon it. "He was crossing the ground on which, a generation later, the tenth Roman legion would

11. And ¹ Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

And he entered into Jerusalem, into the temple; and when he had looked round about upon all things, it being now eventide, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

¹ Matt. 21: 12.

be encamped, as part of the besieging force destined to lay all the splendors before him in ashes." — *Edersheim*. In vision he saw the most terrible siege on record, in which the besieged "fought for miserable scraps," chewed belts and shoes, and tore off the leather from their shields, and ate wisps of hay, and even then died by thousands from the horrors of famine; 97,000 were taken prisoners, and 1,100,000 perished. The ground around the city was planted thick with crosses on which Jews were crucified, till there was room for no more. Did he not also look beyond this to the more awful destiny of those whom even the infinite love of God could not lead to repentance? Even in the midst of our rejoicing over the triumphs of Christianity, we should weep over those who will not be saved.

Ye hearts that love the Lord,
If at this sight ye burn,

See that in thought, in deed, in word,
Ye hate what made him mourn.

— *Keble*.

SCENE VII. Cold Critics. — Luke 19: 39, 40. Some of the Pharisees who witnessed this scene were stirred to antagonism by it. They were "lumps of ice in a sea of fire." Like the enemies around Octavius, "Some that smile have in their hearts millions of mischiefs." They begged Jesus to restrain the enthusiasm of his followers. Perhaps, as Godet suggests, their words "accompanied with an irritated and anxious look toward the citadel of Antonia, the residence of the Roman garrison. This look seemed to say 'Seest thou . . . ? Are not the Romans there? Wilt thou destroy us?'" Jesus' reply was that the very stones would cry out if these held their peace. No power could repress the fact that here was the true Messiah. No hearts, less hard than stones, could repress their enthusiasm. Mark Antony says,

"Put a tongue
In every wound of Cæsar, that should move
The stones of Rome to rise and mutiny."

The stones of Jerusalem, when not one was left upon another, did cry out. "The superscription at Salzburg, in the rocks, 'TE SAXA LOQUUNTUR,' is now history." — *Oosterzee*. Stones of Nineveh, Babylon, Egypt, tombs and temples still cry out the truth of God's word.

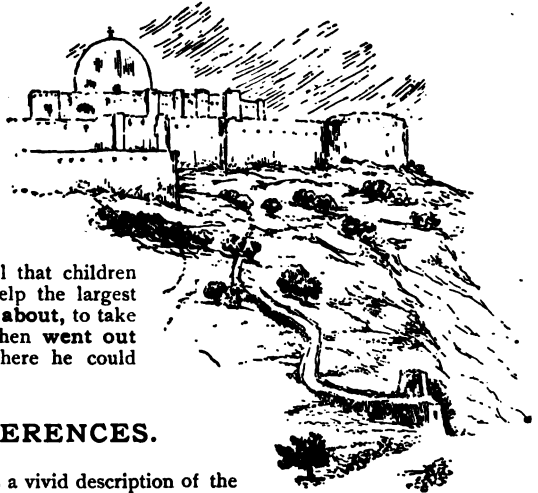
SCENE VIII. The King in the Royal City. — V. 11. And Jesus entered into Jerusalem. The royal city, the visible capital of the kingdom, and, ever since, the type of the central glory of the kingdom of God. And into the temple, his Father's house, the royal palace. Here Jesus did royal deeds (Matt. 21: 14), healing the blind and the lame, and preparing for his great kingly deed on the morrow of cleansing the temple, thus taking possession of his Father's house.

SCENE IX. The Children's Hosannas. — Matt. 21: 15, 16. The children joined in the shouts of Hosanna, catch - *Children's Praises*. ing the enthusiasm of their elders. The Pharisees were displeased at this, but Jesus quoted to them from the eighth Psalm: "Out of



Triumphal Entry.

the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise." Note that the church should take the best care that the children should join in the services of praise. They should arrange their services and build their edifices so that the children can thus have part. The older people will find that *thus* praise is perfected. The gospel preached in so direct and simple a manner, the doctrines stated in so clear and simple a form that children can understand them, the services so devotional and helpful that children can be uplifted by them, will most help the largest number of people. He looked round about, to take in the situation, and the needs, and then went out unto Bethany with the twelve, where he could spend the night in peace.



Road to Jerusalem.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Gen. Lew Wallace's *Ben Hur* gives a vivid description of the scenes and circumstances of this period of Christ's life. See Robinson's *Researches*, I. 473, for modern illustration of spreading garments in the way for those the people would honor. *Land and Book*, new ed., Vol. I., pp. 408-414; Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 188-191; Hanna's *Life of Christ*, pp. 493-501; Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, pp. 365-378; McGarvey's *Lands of the Bible*, p. 232. For an interesting account of the destruction of Jerusalem, see Josephus, *Our Young Folks' Josephus*, 409-461 (Lippincott), and Charlotte Elizabeth's *Judea Capta*; Keble's *Christian Year*, "Christ Weeping over Jerusalem"; Pinnock's *Christ Our King*, "Triumphs of the King"; *Sermons* by J. C. Hare, "The Coming of the King of Sion"; Dr. Arnold's *Rugby Sermons*, 3d series, p. 75.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. In speaking of a little colt, Jesus said: "The Lord hath need of him." Can there be a child, a young man, a mature man, however poor, or feeble, or ignorant, who is not of more value than this animal, and may not say: "The Lord hath need of me also"? — *Godet*. Compare the lad with five loaves at the feeding of the five thousand.
2. The Lord has enough, but it is his method to take his children into partnership with him. It is an honor, a privilege, and a blessing to them. He has need of us, of our money, our talents.
3. The Lord returns all that he borrows of us, and a great deal more. The ass returned to its owner was worth tenfold more after its association with the King of kings.
4. Jesus says to the ships of commerce, and to railroads, Carry my missionaries, and my gospel; to telegraphs, Aid my triumphs; to all the inventions of civilization, I will use you to hasten my coming.
5. The humblest persons, the humblest things are transfigured with glory and joy, when made the instruments of our Lord's triumph. Jesus is the king of the whole earth; but he is the Prince of Peace; his victories are by the weapons of peace.
6. This triumphal procession was a dim foreshadowing of the triumph of the gospel; Jesus is riding through the centuries toward the new Jerusalem; and all the world will join in the hosannas.
7. We should cast our garments, wealth, talents, character, deeds of love before Jesus, our king. He would ride through Africa and India and China, — shall we lend him our aid? The people praised Jesus for his wonderful works, but asked nothing for themselves. La Rochefoucauld says cynically, "The gratitude of most men is only a secret desire to receive greater favors." But here they only gave praise.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

TRACE the route on the map.

USE all four accounts.

MAKE the different scenes vivid and real as a series of pictures, each with its practical application.

Illustration. POMPEY'S TRIUMPH. In September, B. C. 61, about 90 years before Christ's triumphal entry, the most magnificent triumph ever seen in Rome was given to Pompey. For two days the grand procession of trophies from every land and a long retinue of captives moved into the city along the Via Sacra. Brazen tablets were carried, on which were engraved the names of the conquered nations, including 1000 castles and 900 cities. The remarkable circumstance of the celebration was that it declared him conqueror of the whole world. So the triumphant procession of Christ into Jerusalem was but a faint shadow of the coming of the Prince of Peace, when all nations and the wealth and glory of them shall take part in his glorious triumph. And the day is fast approaching. — *After Foster's Cyclopædia of Illustrations.*

Illustration. *They took off their own outer robes*; somewhat on the principle that actuated the heart of young Sir Walter Raleigh, when, on Queen Elizabeth coming to a miry part of the road, and hesitating for an instant how to step across, he "took off his new plush mantle, and spread it on the ground. Her majesty trod gently over the fair foot-cloth." — *Morison.*

Illustrations. "Thus David was welcomed by singing and dancing women, out of all the cities of Israel, as he came back from the slaughter of the Philistines. Herodotus records that when Xerxes was passing over the bridge of the Hellespont, the way before him was strewn with branches of myrtle, while burning perfumes filled the air. Quintus Curtius tells of the scattering of flowers in the way before Alexander the Great when he entered Babylon. Monier, in our own day, saw the way of a Persian ruler strewn with roses for three miles; while glass vessels filled with sugar were broken under his horse's feet, — the sugar being symbolical of prosperity. — *Prof. Isaac Hall, in Sunday-School Times.* "When Mordecai issued from the palace of Ahasuerus the streets (Targum on Esther) were strewn with myrtle." We are informed by Robinson in his *Biblical Researches* that "the Bethlehemites threw their garments under the feet of the English consul's horses at Damascus when they had come to implore his aid." — *Prof. J. J. Given.*

LESSON II. — APRIL 14.

(EASTER LESSON. — 1 Cor. 15: 3-14.)

(For this lesson see treatment in *Select Notes* for 1893, Lesson VI., Fourth Quarter, pp. 279-284, or exchange for Lesson IX. or X. of this quarter on the Resurrection.)

THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN. — MARK 12: 1-12.

Golden Text. — *They will reverence my son.* — MARK 12: 6.

THE SECTION includes the whole of Jesus' experiences and discourses in the courts of the temple on Monday and Tuesday, April 3 and 4, A. D. 30, largely in Mark, chapters 11 and 12.

MONDAY. (1) The cleansing of the temple, Mark 11: 15-18. (2) The visit of the Greeks, and discourse, John 12: 20-50.

TUESDAY. (3) The barren fig tree withered, Mark 11: 19-26. (4) The opposition of the rulers set forth in three parables, of which the lesson is one, Mark 11: 27 to 12: 12; Matthew 21: 28 to 22: 14. (5) Questions asked and discussed, Mark 12: 13-37. (6) Denunciation of the Pharisees, his last public discourse, Matthew 23: 1-39. (7) The widow's mite, Mark 12: 41-44.

TIME. — Tuesday, April 4, A. D. 30. Two days after our last lesson. This was Christ's last great day of teaching in Jerusalem.

PLACE. — In the temple at Jerusalem.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS. — Matthew 21: 33-46; Luke 20: 9-19.

COMPARE with Isaiah 5: 1-7.

CIRCUMSTANCES. — We have now come to the great day of Jesus' public teaching in the temple. It was his last day of public teaching, and final offer to the Jews to be accepted as their Messiah.

On Sunday he had offered himself to the Jews as their Messiah King, by entering the capital in triumphal procession.

On Monday he had with kingly authority driven out from his Father's house those who were defiling it with worldly traffic, and performed miracles worthy of the Messiah, thus presenting his claims again for their acceptance.

Once more he presents his claims and makes known the great opportunity offered the people from God for earthly and spiritual salvation; and brings home the truth to them as clearly as if written with a pencil of light on the sky, by means of three parables, one of which is given in to-day's lesson.

These parables are severe and threatening, "but the spirit of them is love." "In the deepest sense he spoke them not against the Pharisees, but for them." As William of Orange carried on the war against the Emperor Philip in the name and in behalf of him against whom he fought, "his object was to carry home to their hearts the conviction of sin, and to impress them with a sense of their danger before it was too late. It was their only hope of salvation." "Even in that terrible *Loving Severity* sentence which puts them lower down than open and disgraceful sinners, there is a door left still unclashed for them to enter. 'The publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God *before you*;' but you may enter after them, if only you, like them, would 'afterward' repent." — *J. Monro Gibson*.

1. And ¹ he began to speak unto them by parables. A *certain* man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about *it*, and digged a *place* for the winefat, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country.

And he began to speak unto them in parables. A man planted a vineyard, and set a hedge about it, and digged a pit for the winepress, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into another country.

¹ Matt. 21: 33. Luke 20: 9.

EXPLANATORY.

I. God's Spiritual Vineyard. — V. 1. And he began to speak unto them by parables, as the best method by which they could now be convinced of the truth. He held, as it were, a mirror before them in which they could see themselves as they really were.

THE OWNER. A *certain* man. Called in Matthew a householder, a landed proprietor, owner of an estate. This householder represents God, who is the creator and owner of all things. He owns this world. He owns the church; he has planted in it.

THE VINEYARD. Planted a vineyard. The image of the kingdom of God as a vine-stock or as a vineyard runs through the whole Old Testament (Deut. 32: 32; Psalms 80: 8-16; Isaiah 5: 1-7; 27: 2, 3; Jeremiah 2: 21; Ezekiel 15: 1-6; 19: 10). We must think of Palestine as, from the remotest period, a land of vineyards. "The large clusters are from twelve to eighteen inches in length." "The largest vine that I have ever seen in Palestine was twelve inches in diameter. This was six or more feet from the roots. The natives say that they will continue bearing for one hundred years." — *Hon. Selah Merrill*. It no doubt belongs to the fitness of the image that a vineyard does, if it is to bring forth richly, require the *most* diligent and never-ceasing care; that there is no season in the year in which much has not to be done in it. Virgil presses this very strongly in words not unworthy to be kept in mind by all to whom a spiritual vineyard has been committed. (See *Georg. II.*, 397-419.) — *Trench*.

THE VINEYARD represents the kingdom of God which was intrusted to the Jews, planted by God with the rich and fruitful vines of the knowledge of God, his commandments, the institutions of religion, and his revealed word. This vineyard was fertile in every good, infinite in possibilities of good for themselves and for the world.

II. What God Did for His Vineyard. — Vs. 1, 2. **THE ENCLOSURE.** And set a hedge about it. A hedge is a row of perfectly dense thorn bushes (often in Judea the

2. And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruit of the vineyard.

And at the season he sent to the husbandmen a (a) servant, that he might receive from the husbandmen of the fruits of the vineyard.

(a) Gr., *bondservant*.



Winepress in a Vineyard.

Dictionary. Here put for the whole apparatus for expressing the juice from the grapes. The winepress consisted of two parts, — (1) the press, or trough above, in which the grapes were placed, and there trodden by the feet of several persons amidst singing and other expressions of joy (Judg. 9: 27; Isa. 16: 10); (Neh. 13: 15; Isa. 63: 2). (2) a smaller trough, into which the expressed juice flowed through a hole or spout.

The winepress represents the various advantages conferred on the people to help them to bring forth good fruit, and present it to the Lord. Every influence, every institution, the teachings of the prophets, the hymns of David, the worship at the sanctuary, all aided the people to produce and develop the virtues which the Lord sought from his vineyard. We did God say, "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done it?" (Isa. 5: 4).

THE WATCH-TOWER. And built a tower. A watch-tower, sometimes built forty fifty feet high, and used for the watchmen who guarded the vineyard, and during the vintage as an abode for the workers and a place of recreation, and perhaps for storing the fruit. The watchman remains at his post day and night, for wild beasts will devour and destroy and men will steal. Foxes are very destructive to the vines (see Cant. 2: 15), and in the vineyards about Hebron hundreds of these animals are caught every year. — *Hon. Selah Merrill*.

The tower represents the watch-care God exercised over his people, through leaders and prophets. God "set them upon the watch-towers of Zion."

THE HUSBANDMEN. And let it out to husbandmen. It is customary in the East as in Ireland and in other parts of Europe, for the owner to let out his estate to *husbandmen*; i. e., to tenants, who pay him an annual rent, either in money, or, as apparently this case, in kind. — *Abbott*.

The husbandmen "represent the rulers of the Jews (v. 12); but the people as a whole a nation or a church, are included (Matt. 21: 43)." — *Schaff*.

THE ABSENCE OF THE OWNER. And went into a far country: rather, as in R. V., *another country*. He went abroad. He left his tenants in charge with everything needful for their work, and thus by his absence tested their faithfulness, and gave them opportunity to develop their characters, and fulfil their duties. Luke says it was "for a long time." A glance at the history of Israel shows that the time from Moses to the present was long. Christ did not come till fifteen hundred years after the planting of the nation and four hundred after the last prophet.

Going into another country represents the fact "that the vineyard was altogether for a long period committed by God to those to whom Jesus refers." — *Pres. Dwight*.

THE FRUIT EXPECTED FROM THE VINEYARD. 2. And at the season he sent. the time when the fruit was ripe, when he would naturally expect to receive the product of his vineyard.

prickly pear), planted around a field, to fence it in and exclude all intruders. — *Whedon*. The word "hedge" here means a fence of whatever material made. — *Morison*. These were to keep out robbers and wild beasts, especially foxes.

This represents the law and the divine institutions, which separated the Jews from the Gentiles, and were a protection against the inroads of immorality and idolatry of the surrounding nations. Moreover, the land of Palestine itself is hedged about by the sea, the mountains, and the desert, as England by the sea, as Greece and Italy by sea and mountains.

THE WINEPRESS. And digged a place for the winefat: or wine vat the vat or vessel into which the liquor flows from the winepress. — *Imperia*

3. And they caught *him*, and beat him, and sent *him* away empty.

4. And again he sent unto them another servant; and at him they cast stones, and wounded *him* in the head, and sent *him* away shamefully handled.

5. And again he sent another; and him they killed, and many others; beating some, and killing some.

6. Having yet therefore one son, his well beloved, he sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

And they took him, and 3 beat him, and sent him away empty.

And again he sent unto 4 them another (*a*) servant; and him they wounded in the head, and handled shamefully.

And he sent another; and 5 him they killed: and many others; beating some, and killing some.

He had yet one, a beloved 6 son: he sent him last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son.

(a) Gr., *bondservant*.

The season of fruits was no definite time, but whenever any good work was to be done; when enough time had elapsed for the Jews to be trained into holy obedience, and into works for leading other nations to God; when God had a right to expect in the nation that nobility of character, that beautiful daily life, that perfection of worship, that care for the poor, that faith and righteousness which their divine laws and institutions were given to produce. *The fruit of the vineyard*. The householder's share, as his stipulated rent for the use of the vineyard.

The fruit was obedience, sincere worship, righteous living, intelligence, growth, giving to the poor, teaching the nations about the true God, high character, preparation for the Messiah.

III. **Treatment of the Messengers sent for the Fruit.** — Vs. 2-5. **He sent . . . a servant.** The servants, that is, the prophets, and other more eminent ministers of God *were sent*, being raised up at particular times, having particular missions.

3. **And they caught him.** The gradual growth of the outrage is clearly traced in these verses. **And beat him.** A verb which strictly means to flay or skin, but is secondarily applied to the severest kind of scourging. — *Alexander*. **And sent him away empty:** that is, without the fruits for which he was sent. The Jews rejected the prophets for the same reasons that men now reject the Bible and the invitations of God. They did not believe in him as the wisest and best ruler. They were tempted to seek their pleasure and their good in wrong ways, and were unwilling to have their actions denounced, or their conscience awakened.

4. **And again, with marvellous patience and unconquerable love, he sent unto them another servant.** God sent prophet after prophet to the Jews, message after message, as he sends many calls and influences to us. **Shamefully handled:** or *dishonored*. It is the generic summing up of all that the imagination naturally suggests when we think of what must have been done to the man in the affray in which his head was seriously wounded. — *Morison*.

5. **And many others; beating some, and killing some.** For an ample historical justification of this description, see Jeremiah, chapters 37, 38; 1 Kings 18: 13; 22: 24-27; 2 Kings 6: 31; 21: 16; 2 Chronicles 24: 19-22; 36: 16; and also Acts 7: 52; and the whole passage finds a parallel in the words of the Apostle (Heb. 11: 36, 37). — *Trench*. It is quite remarkable how many of the prophets were at one time or many ill treated by the Jews, — Moses, Elijah, Elisha, Jeremiah, Isaiah, Amos, Zechariah. And the fruit the Lord had a right to expect the people did not give him. The nation as a whole were very disappointing. The picture of what they might have been placed beside the picture of what they were, presents a contrast like that of a summer garden and a winter pasture land.

IV. **God's Crowning Work for the Salvation of Men.** — Vs. 6-8. 6. **Having yet therefore one son.** It is only



Watchtower.

7. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

8. And they took him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

9. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

But those husbandmen said 7 among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours.

And they took him, and 8 killed him, and cast him forth out of the vineyard.

What therefore will the 9 lord of the vineyard do? he will come and destroy the husbandmen, and will give the vineyard unto others.

by placing together the three accounts that we can understand the full beauty and power of this passage, "Then said the Lord of the vineyard, What shall I do? Having yet therefore one son, his well beloved, he said, I will send my beloved son. He sent him also last unto them, saying, They will reverence my son." This was the last and crowning effort of divine mercy; after which, on the one side, all the resources even of heavenly love are exhausted; on the other, the measure of sins is perfectly filled up. — *Trench*. **His well beloved**: dear to him as his own self. This is said to show the greatness of God's love to man. (John 3: 16.) **They will reverence my son**. This he had a right to expect from gratitude, and from the blessings involved, and the loss that would follow rejection.

GOD SENDS HIS SON. We should dwell on the infinite greatness and preciousness of this expression of God's desire that all men should be saved. (1) The highest possible expression of God's love for man is the Almighty Creator sending his beloved Son from the highest heaven to this smallest corner of his universe to save sinful men. (2) In Jesus, his son, are the highest possible powers that can work together for the salvation of man, — the forgiveness of sin, the light of truth about God and immortality, the strongest motives, hope, fear, love, duty, — the influences of the life-giving spirit, a perfect example. There is no conceivable influence or power by which men can be drawn to God which is not found in Jesus Christ.

7. But those husbandmen said among themselves, This is the heir. Christ is the heir of all things (Heb. 1: 2). The whole world is his inheritance, and will become his in reality when all the kingdoms of earth become his kingdom, and all hearts accept him as king. Did the Jews know that they were putting to death the heir, the Son of God? Jesus says, "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do." They did not realize it, but they knew they were doing wrong. They had fears lest he might be the Messiah. They shut their eyes lest they should see. They sinned against evidence. **Let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours**. "The husbandmen are represented as relying upon the custom of the East, that, if an owner is not to be found, and the occupier pays the taxes to government for six years, the latter is looked on as the proprietor." — *Canon Tristram*. If Jesus was the Messiah, and he was introducing the kingdom of God, the whole spirit of which was so different from theirs, then they would lose their places as rulers, as teachers, as men of influence, their authority over the people, and their chief business. They were so connected with a system, and with wrong ideas, and principles, and customs, which must pass away with Christ's reign, that if Christ prevailed they must fall. But they imagined that if they could destroy Christ they could continue in possession of the inheritance, be rulers over Israel, teachers and leaders of the people, the possessors of the nation, living on the fat of the land; still renting the temple courts to money changers.

8. And killed him: as the Jews did Jesus. They killed him that they might possess; and because they killed they lost. — *Augustine*. **Cast him out of the vineyard**. The act of casting out denotes the whole rejection of our Lord, but perhaps with an allusion to the literal fact of his suffering without the holy city (Heb. 13: 11-13), which must not, however, be regarded as the whole sense. — *Alexander*.

V. The Consequences. — V. 9. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do? Every possible method of leading them to right conduct had been exhausted. If they will not serve God, if they will not care for his kingdom and the salvation of the world, then they must be put out of the way, and made warnings to others. **He will come and destroy the husbandmen**. There was nothing else to do. It was a simple matter of justice. And yet the justice was so terrible that the people, who seem first to have caught a glimpse of Jesus' meaning, cried out *God forbid*, when they saw their rulers thus condemning themselves (Luke 20: 16). **Give the vineyard unto others**. Expressed by the apostle when he said, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13: 46). The others are the Christian church, which is grafted upon the old tree from which the branches were

10. And have ye not read this Scripture; ¹ The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

11. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

12. And ² they sought to lay hold on him, but feared the people; for they knew that he had spoken the parable against them: and they left him, and went their way.

Have ye not read even this ¹⁰ scripture;
The stone which the builders rejected,
The same was made the head of the corner:
This was from the Lord, ¹¹
And it is marvellous in our eyes?
And they sought to lay ¹²
hold on him; and they feared the multitude; for they perceived that he spake the parable against them: and they left him, and went away.

¹ Psa. 118: 22.² Matt. 21: 45, 46. Mark 11: 18. John 7: 25, 30, 44.

cut off. Every one who believes in Jesus becomes a child of Abraham, and an inheritor of the promises (Gal. 3: 7, 9, 29). In the Christian kingdom of God are fulfilled the promises made of old. In the summer of A. D. 70, forty years after this parable was spoken, Jerusalem was destroyed, and the temple was burned and laid in ruins by the Roman army under Titus, after the most terrible siege on record. And the Jews have been dispersed over the earth ever since. Yet, if they had been faithful, they might have been the leading nation in the world, walking as kings and princes among men, the joy of the whole earth, shedding the light of God's truth and righteousness over the nations. But they would not; they rejected the Messiah and perished.

VI. The Rejected shall yet Triumph.—Vs. 10-12. 10. And, Luke says he here looked upon them, using a word which implies an intense, earnest gaze, as if he would see their very hearts, and pitied them. **Have ye not read this Scripture.** Referring them to Psalms 118: 22, 23,—a Psalm which the Jews applied to the Messiah. Peter twice applied it to him (Acts 4: 11; 1 Pet. 2: 7). In the primary meaning of the Psalm the illustration seems to have been drawn from one of the stones, quarried, hewn, and marked, away from the site of the temple, which the builders, ignorant of the head architect's plans, or finding on it no mark (such as recent explorations in Jerusalem have shown to have been placed on the stones of Solomon's temple in the place where they were quarried, to indicate their position in the future structure of the fabric), had put on one side as having no place in the building, but which was found afterwards to be that on which the completeness of the structure depended,—on which, as the chief corner-stone, the two walls met and were bonded together.—*Plumptre.* **The stone.** The stone is the whole kingdom and power of the Messiah summed up in himself.—*Alford.* **The builders rejected.** The builders answer to the husbandmen: they were appointed of God to carry up the spiritual building, as these to cultivate the spiritual vineyard. The rejection of the chief corner-stone answers exactly to the denying and **The Corner-Stone.** murdering the heir.—*Trench.* **Become the head of the corner.**

Referring *not* to the highest point or coping of the wall, but to the corner-stone, laid at the foundation, binding together the two walls; on it the whole superstructure, in a measure, rests. There are four corner-stones, but in large buildings one is generally laid with ceremony, as the first step in the true structure of the edifice. Christ is declared elsewhere in the New Testament to be the corner-stone of his church (see Acts 4: 11; 1 Cor. 3: 11; 1 Pet. 2: 6, 7).—*Abbott.* The main thought is that the Messiah, even if rejected by the "builders," should become the corner-stone of the real temple of God (his new spiritual kingdom).—*Schaff.* Every temple that is to stand, be it nation or individual soul, must have Christ for the corner-stone, or it will perish. "The great corner-stones in all world-famous causes have been stones which the builders rejected; e.g., unpopular principles, unwelcome truths, unconventional, but consecrated men."—*Glover.* Compare Acts 4: 13; 1 Corinthians 1: 26, 27. But the fact that a stone is rejected does not make it a corner-stone. Luke adds that *whosoever shall fall upon that stone*, stumbles at the humiliation of Jesus, and so does not accept his claims, *shall be broken*, shall suffer great injury, but may yet be saved by repentance and faith. *But on whomsoever it shall fall*, in final judgment and punishment, it shall *grind him to powder*, in complete and irremediable destruction.

11. **This.** That is, this strange exaltation of the despised to be chief of all. **Was the Lord's doing.** Or, as in the R. V., *This was from the Lord.* **And it is marvellous in our eyes.** It is one of the Lord's wonderful ways of working, and will come to pass because God rules and controls *all things*.—*Geikie.*

12. **And they sought to lay hold on him:** to arrest him, for they began to realize



Laborers in a Vineyard.

that the parable was an argument against them (Luke). But feared the people: who had come from other parts of Palestine, and from other countries, and who were more free from prejudice, and had little at stake. Many of them he had taught and healed. Popular opinion is a great power for good or evil. They left him, to await a time when the multitudes were not with him.

VII. Modern Applications, to the Individual.

—(1) THE VINEYARD. God has intrusted to each of us a blessed and fruitful vineyard, which we are to cultivate for him. He has planted his new life in us. He has given us our life, our soul. He gives us each a portion of all those things he has committed to the church as a whole. He makes us fruitful by his Word and his Spirit. He gives us every means of grace by which to cultivate the vineyard. He gives us defences. He is our watch-tower. He gives grace for every time of need. He furnishes the armor against temptation.

The body is a vineyard that is entrusted to our care, to be well treated as an instrument for doing God's work. A good workman always takes good care of his tools. "The human body is one of the most glorious things in the world." "Years ago, Dr. Todd, of Pittsfield, Mass., wrote a book called *The House I Live In*, and in it he fascinated the young reader by his description of the human body." — *Schauffler*.

The mind is still more wonderful, and should be educated, trained, kept pure and bright, that it may bring forth fruit for the master.

The soul, the very self — the citadel, the dwelling-place of the moral nature, the fountain of character, — is a vineyard that should be kept with all diligence, "for out of it are the issues of life."

(2) THE FRUITS are gratitude, love, obedience, worship, consecration of time, talents and property toward God; and all the fruits of the Spirit toward men; intelligence, generosity, character, growth.

NOTE that, as the cultivator of the vineyard was to enjoy the fruits it bore, and the more fruitful it was, and the more industriously he cultivated it for the owner, the more abundant and delightful was his own reward; so it is with those to whom God has intrusted his spiritual vineyard; every fruit God requires is best for themselves. He wants them to use and enjoy. He never "muzzles the ox that treadeth out the corn." All that pleases him blesses us.

(3) THE RENT. We have always to pay rent for every privilege. For their land the Jews must pay the rent of national purity, justice, patriotism; for their spiritual privileges, the rent of faith and obedience; for office, the rent of service to God and man. — *R. Glover*. For every vineyard intrusted to us, every privilege and blessing, God has a right to expect from us the fruits in the season thereof.

(4) THE SEASON OF FRUITS is no definite time, but every opportunity to believe on Jesus, to serve God, or man.

(5) SENDING FOR THE FRUITS. Every special call to love and serve God, every service at the church, every opportunity to do good, every providence of God, every season of revival, the voice of the Holy Spirit, the Sabbath, the Bible, conscience, — all are servants whom God sends to us for the fruits that are due him.

(6) THE FRUITS REFUSED. The behavior of these husbandmen is only a picture of the way impenitent men still treat God's messengers of mercy, — the Holy Spirit, the Bible, the influences of religion. There is nothing excessive in God's demands; there is nothing in them which is not for our highest good; and yet how we have treated them! how often we stop our ears to his calls! how often we shut out his Holy Spirit from our hearts! how often do the impressions he makes, fade like the morning cloud and early dew! how often do we resist conscience! What greater meanness in the universe than our rejection of God's messengers while we are actually enjoying the vineyard he gave us!

(7) THE COMING OF THE SON. The unspeakable love of God to us is shown in the

sending of his Son (John 3: 16). He is the wisdom and power of God for salvation. God has done all that infinite love can do to save us. He comes often to our souls with special influences to lead us to accept him. Every one at some time comes to the Valley of Decision.

(8) **REJECTING THE SON.** As referring to the vineyard of our own souls, it is the determination not to be ruled by Christ, but to be our own king, and hold possession of ourselves to do as we please, imagining that thereby we can retain possession of our advantages and blessings, of ourselves. "The inheritance shall be ours."

(9) **THE CONSEQUENCES.** If we reject Christ for this world, we are lost for this world. Those who reject Christ from their lives and plans, in order that they may keep possession of themselves, their pleasures, and hopes, have taken the shortest and surest way to lose them. The righteous shall inherit the earth. If we refuse the source of righteousness, we reject our earthly inheritance. How much more is this true of the future! Those who reject Christ cannot be saved. They refuse eternal life; they reject the very principles which make heaven what it is. They repel the strongest influence that can lead them to a holy life. They throw away their last hope.

Though mills of God grind slowly, yet they grind exceeding small;
Though with patience he stands waiting, with exactness grinds he all.

— Logan.

VIII. Application to the Church.—The Christian church is peculiarly God's vineyard which he has planted. Its origin and life are from him. He has committed to it his truth, his holy Spirit, the Sabbath, intelligence, piety, property, influence, Sunday schools, missions, organization, every means and opportunity for bringing forth every good fruit of the Spirit; and he has reason to expect the most abundant and glorious fruits. In the Oriental vineyard "when grapes are ripening, a double watch is kept."—*Van Lennep*. So should the church in seasons of revival.

IX. Application to the Nation.—To the American people, as a people, God has certainly given a wonderful vineyard, marvellously fruitful and marvellously protected. But we greatly mistake if we imagine that this is our country, with which we may do what we please. It is let to us for a time, and for our use of it we must give account.—*L. Abbott*. Every advantage has been given us for bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, liberty, and religion. "These claims of God are the glory of men; and it is more for our sake than his own that God sends for fruit." There is only one way in which we as a nation can keep the goodly heritage in which God has placed us. By obedience to his laws, by true and earnest religious life, by faithfulness in giving the gospel to all the people, by justice and righteousness to all,—to the poor, to the Indian, to the colored race, to every one that is oppressed,—by putting down intemperance, gambling, and vice,—only by this loyalty to God, who gave us this country, can we possibly keep our country. Reject the Son of God, his principles, his truth, and his power, and we are lost.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

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SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

There is no need in this lesson of separate *Practical Suggestions*, because the whole parable overflows with them.

Give a clear account of the **CIRCUMSTANCES**, so as to understand the application to the Jews.

A **WORD PICTURE**, vivid and graphic, will aid the effect.

APPLICATIONS will be made, of course, according to circumstances.

Illustration. "It has been pointed out by Lord Macaulay that in an English cathedral there is an exquisite stained window which was made by an apprentice out of the

pieces of glass which had been rejected by his master, and it was so far superior in the church that, according to tradition, the envious artist killed himself with it." — *Wesley O. Holway*.

Illustration. "There is a tradition of the Jewish rabbis which relates the history of a wonderful stone, prepared, as they say, for use in the building of Solomon's temple. It was a block for that matchless edifice was shaped and fitted for its particular place, an away from the distant quarry marked for the masons. But this one was so different from any other that no one knew what to do with it. Beautiful, indeed, it was; carved in figures of exquisite loveliness and grace; but it had no fellow; it fitted nowhere; and the impatient and perplexed workmen flung it aside as only a splendid piece of marble. Years passed while the proud structure was going up without the sound of axe or hammer. During all the time, this despised fragment *The Rejected Stone* of rock was lying in the valley of Jehosaphat covered with dirt and moss. Then came the day of dedication; the vast throng arrived to see what the Israelites were wont to call 'the noblest fabric under the sun.' There it stood, crowning the mountain's ridge, and shining with whiteness of silver and yellowness of gold. The whole multitude gazed admiringly upon its magnificent proportions, grand in their splendor as marble. But when one said that the east tower was unfinished, or, at least, looked like the chief architect grew impatient again, and replied that Solomon was wise, but a building which admitted there was a gap in his plans. By and by the king drew near in person; and when he retinue he rode directly to the incomplete spot, as if he there expected most to be present. 'Why is this neglect?' he asked in tones of indignant surprise. 'Where is the stone sent for the head of this corner?' Then suddenly the frightened workmen bent themselves of that rejected stone which they had been spurning as worthless. They took it again, cleared it from its defilement, swung it fairly up into its place, and found indeed the top-stone fitted so as to give the last grace to the whole." — *C. S. Robinson*.

LESSON III. — APRIL 21.

WATCHFULNESS. — MATT. 24: 42-51.

QUARTERLY TEMPERANCE LESSON.

Golden Text. — *Take ye heed, watch and pray.* — MARK 13: 33.

THE SECTION includes the discourses of Jesus to his disciples Tuesday afternoon after he had left the temple, on the way to Bethany over the Mount of Olives, Matthew chapters 24 and 25; and the parallels, Mark 13: 1-37; Luke 21; 5-36.

TIME. — Tuesday afternoon, April 4, A. D. 30. The same day, and soon after the last lesson.

PLACE. — The Mount of Olives, overlooking Jerusalem, on the way to Bethany.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Circumstances. — It was the Tuesday afternoon before the crucifixion. Jesus had spent most of the day in the temple courts in a final effort to persuade the ruler of the people to accept him as the Messiah, and so save both themselves and the nation. Before he leaves, he pronounces the most solemn woes against them, not in a denunciating manner, but as a statement of a fact and a warning. It was the cry of Love itself, uttered with tears. Leaving the temple, Jesus, with his disciples, viewed the massive found as they passed by, and as they climbed the heights of Olivet, he looked into the future and saw all in ruins, not one stone left upon another. Then his prophetic eyes took a range into the future and saw the day of judgment, of which the destruction of Jerusalem was an awful type. Both arose from the same causes, because the people would not repent and believe. The destruction of Jerusalem "bore the same relation to the Jews as the flood did to the antediluvians, which was emphatically the end of the world to them," this was but "a miniature, on a much smaller scale," of the great Last Day. — *M. Gibson*.

42. ¹ Watch therefore; for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

Watch therefore: for ye ⁴² know not on what day your Lord cometh.

¹ Matt. 25: 13. Mark 13: 33. Luke 21: 36.

II. The Duty of the Hour. Watch.—V. 42. Therefore, on account of the state of things described in the previous verses. **Watch**, both in the Greek and in the English, is closely allied to *wake*. In the Greek, according to Thayer, it is derived from the perfect tense, “to have been aroused from sleep, to be awake.” It expresses not a mere act, but a state of wakefulness and watching. “What the Saviour enjoins is not curiosity straining to be the first to see the returning Master, but the wakefulness and diligence that overlooks no duty, indulges no indolence. The last thing that would please a master would be the idle curiosity which would make the servants neglect their work to stand outside the door gazing to catch a glimpse of his return. What the Master desires is wakeful work.”—*R. Glover*.

SIX OCCASIONS for watchfulness. (1) The deceitfulness of riches. (2) Worldly conformities that steal one's time and usefulness. (3) The kisses of the enemy. (4) The arch-enemy like a roaring lion. (5) Relaxing of the mind. The violin must be keyed to concert pitch every few minutes, else it flats itself. (6) Against the loss that comes from failing to watch.—*Bishop H. W. Warren*.

There were to be wars, persecutions, great iniquities, false prophets, the love of saints even growing cold, fearful tribulations which could be typified only by the sun and moon darkened and the stars falling from heaven; great changes and overturnings which seemed like the end of all things, but were in reality the springtime of the new kingdom, the birth of the new heavens and the new earth. And at some time the Lord himself is to appear in the clouds of heaven, a King, a Saviour, and a Judge (1 Thess. 4: 13 -18; Rev. 20: 7 to 22: 5; Matt. 25.) Therefore we are to watch **Watch and Pray**.

against temptations from within and without; against pervading iniquities which fill the air with moral malaria, or chill the piety of even the church; against failure in duty; against the loss of the warmth of first love; against the day of death and of judgment, so as to be prepared for them when they come. We are also to watch for the coming of the Lord; watch for it with hope and joy, watch for the signs of his special presence and power, watch for openings to serve him by helping his poor children, watch for opportunities of comforting the sad, upholding the weak, reclaiming the erring, teaching the ignorant, leading men to Jesus, aiding his cause. “The church should march with its face towards the future.” Christianity is a sacred memory of the crucified and risen Lord. It is also a present power; looking up to the Saviour at the right hand of God, and ever present with us. It is more; it is a most joyous hope. “When Christ bids us watch, he bids us thus look forward for our Christ. It is certain that the apostles themselves maintained this attitude of mind and exhorted others to do so, bidding them ever to be ‘looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.’ I do not propose to entangle myself in the meshes of doubtful interpretations of unfulfilled prophecies. But I desire ever to keep my own face toward the dawn, toward the rising of the Sun of righteousness. All the glories of present Christian life and experience are but as the rays which shoot above the horizon, before the sun appears in his glory.”—*Lyman Abbott*.

III. Reasons for Watching. A Parable.—Vs. 42-44.



The Wailing Place of the Jews.

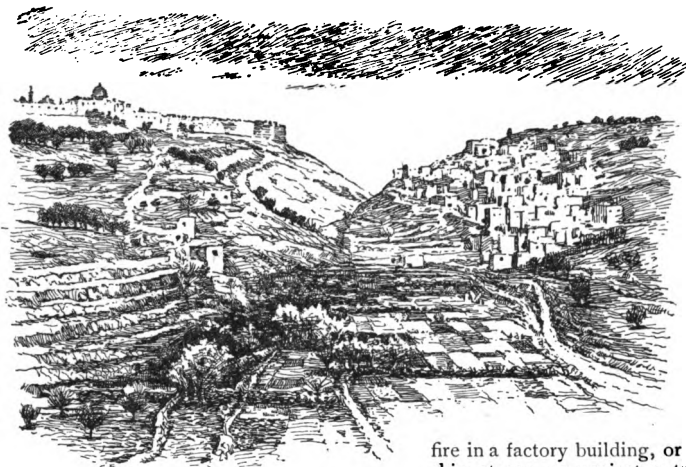
43. But ¹ know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.

(a) But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be (b) broken through.

¹ 1 Thess. 5: 6. Rev. 3: 3; 16: 15. 2 Pet. 3: 10.

(a) Or, *But this ye know.*

(b) Gr., *digged through.*



The King's Dale.

(Jerusalem on the left and Mount of Olives on the right.)

For ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.

"No, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father" (Mark 13-32). "It is, in a sense, because of his ignorance that a watchman has his chief value in any sphere of watching. Whether as a watcher against a surprise from the enemy on the picket line, or against burglars in a banking-office or a private house, or against

fire in a factory building, or against icebergs on a ship at sea, or against a turn of disease in the patient in a sickroom,—it is because he does not know what the next hour may

Watch against Surprise.

bring forth that the watcher is set to watch there, and that his duty is to be always on the alert with a sense of responsibility for his unfailing watchfulness."

—*H. C. Trumbull.*

"The householder's ignorance of the time when the thief would come is the reason why he does not watch. He cannot keep awake all night, and every night, to be ready for him; so he has to go to sleep, and is robbed. But our ignorance is the reason for wakefulness, because we can keep awake all the night of life. The householder watches to prevent, but we to share in that for which the watch is kept." —*Maclaren.* "But with all the obscurity thus intentionally thrown around the day and the hour of Christ's coming, let us not forget that no obscurity, no uncertainty hangs around the great event itself. In all that future which lies before us, these are the only two events of which we are absolutely certain: our own approaching death, our Lord's approaching advent." —*Hanna.*

43. If the goodman of the house: the master or owner of the house. **Had known in what watch the thief would come:** or *was coming.* The night was divided into watches, or periods, during each of which one division of the guards kept watch. It is said that our pocket timepieces are called watches because originally they measured the periods of watching. **He would have watched.** "In the East, which knows not the happy and secure municipal arrangements of Western lands, every one must be his own policeman. The state punishes, but leaves the prevention and detection of theft and robbery to the individual interested. Hence the watchman is a necessary and important personage everywhere. Not only in the vineyards of the watch-towers of which mention has been made in a former note, but in the houses and villages, the watchman is needful." —*Tristram.* **And not have suffered, etc.** He took the ordinary precautions of bars and bolts. But he should have done more.

ILLUSTRATION. Homer's *Odyssey* describes the hero Ulysses as falling asleep just before he reached his home, Ithaca, after a long voyage, and a sailor loosing the winds of Æolus during his sleep was the means of driving him away to many long wanderings.

ILLUSTRATION. The excellent little story, *Parley the Porter*, published as a tract, by

44. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.

45. ¹ Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

46. ² Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47. Verily I say unto you, ³ That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.

Therefore be ye also 44 ready: for in an hour that ye think not the Son of man cometh.

Who then is the faithful 45 and wise servant, whom his Lord hath set over his household, to give them their food in due season?

Blessed is that servant, 46 whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

Verily I say unto you, that 47 he will set him over all that he hath.

¹ Luke 12: 42. Acts 20: 28. ¹ Cor. 4: 2. Heb. 3: 5. ² Rev. 16: 15. ³ Matt. 25: 21, 23. Luke 22: 29.

the American Tract Society, is an unusually effective illustration for children, as to the duty of watching, the danger of neglect, and the way in which people are put off their guard.

44. **Therefore be ye also ready:** be always prepared, never be spiritually asleep, never be away from your place and duty. One cannot always watch his house; he must have times of sleep; but in spiritual things he can always be ready for the coming of his Lord. **For in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.** "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5: 2; see also 2 Pet. 3: 10). The comings of the Lord are ever unexpected to us, — his coming at death, his coming to judge the world, his coming in the crises of our lives, his coming with opportunities and open doors, his coming with the power of the Holy Spirit. The only way is for us to be ever about our Master's business, ever doing his will, ever loving his presence, ever walking with God, and we shall be ready and glad when he comes.

Christ's Unexpected Coming.

THE THINGS WHICH TEND TO PUT US TO SLEEP: the delay of the coming; coldness and worldliness in the community; our sinful hearts and desires; unbelief, insidious temptations which gradually lead astray before we are aware. We are beset by perpetual temptations to sleep, to spiritual drowsiness and torpor. "An opium sky rains down soporifics." The last thing we should have is a sleepy religion.

IV. **How to Watch; and the Reward. A Portrait.** — Vs. 45-47. Compare Luke 12: 42-46.

45. **Who then is a faithful and wise servant,** or steward, who was generally a slave whom his master had chosen on account of his trustworthiness and intelligence to be the steward of his estate. — *Prof. Carr.* **Whom his lord hath made ruler over his household:** while he himself went abroad. This power was conferred on account of previous faithfulness and ability. **To give them meat,** food at regular hours. He is prompt in his duties. The object of God in giving men talent or power is that they may minister to others. "*Who?* it is the servant who attends to his duties, every day and every hour, just as he would do if he knew that his lord would return that very day, or in that very hour. He only is *faithful* to his lord. He only is *prudent* and *wise* for himself." — *Morison.*

How to WATCH. 46. **Blessed.** He possesses the beatitudes. **Shall find so doing.** We see by this illustration of Christ what he means by watching; not gazing up into the heaven for signs, but faithful performance of duty, as if God himself were ever present, with hope and joy in the thought of his coming. In many cases watching is joined with prayer, because he that means to watch will seek all the helps possible, especially the guardianship of God.

47. **Will make him ruler (or set him) over all his goods,** over all his property of every kind, and not simply over his body of domestics. (Compare 25: 21; Luke 19: 17, 26.) Our Lord here puts honor upon those who serve him by comparing them, not to a menial or ordinary slave, but to the intelligent, faithful, and trusted head-slave of the household, like Joseph in Potiphar's house. — *Broadus.*

THE REWARD. "That promotion shall not be like earthly promotion, wherein the eminence of one excludes that of another, — but rather like the diffusion of love, in which, the more each has, the more there is for all." — *Alford.* So each saint owns all God's possessions, even now (1 Cor. 3: 21, 22). — *Abbott.*

The reward is both outward and inward, more glories, and blessings, and joys, and larger capacities for usefulness and enjoyment. Larger fields and wider spheres are given, greater opportunities for doing good, and a clearer perception of God, a fuller reception of all that makes heaven what it is. The reward is like imparting a new sense. We

48. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;

49. And shall begin to smite *his* fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

50. The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and in an hour that he is not aware of,

51. And shall cut him asunder, and appoint *him* his portion with the hypocrites: ¹ there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

But if that evil servant 48 shall say in his heart, My lord tarrieth; and shall begin to beat his fellow-servants, and shall eat and drink with the drunken; the lord 50 of that servant shall come in a day when he expecteth not, and in an hour when he knoweth not, and shall cut 51 him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be the weeping and gnashing of teeth.

¹ Matt. 8: 12; 25: 30.

live in the universe like one born blind. The blind man enjoys many things; he feels the warmth of the sunshine, but the exquisite glories of color in flower and forest, the splendor of the sky, the infinite reach of sight are unknown till his eyes are opened. Then, while in the same place and sur- **Creating New Worlds.** rounded by the same things as before, he has entered a new world.

There are many such spheres around us, one beyond the other, each one more glorious than the one within. Some are opened at conversion, others by various Christian experiences, and still there is more to follow. And the only way to have our eyes opened to them is by faithfulness in the lesser sphere. To him that hath shall be given.

V. Failure to Watch, and Its Consequences Illustrated. — Vs. 48-51. 48. **Evil servant shall say in his heart**, because he would be ashamed to say it openly; it would shock him. **My lord delayeth his coming**, so that the time of reckoning is far away; nor will he ever know of the evil doings of his servant.

An excellent illustration is found in Homer's *Odyssey*, when Ulysses comes back to his own home after many years of absence, and discovers the revellers in his house.

49. **Smite his fellow servants**, like a petty tyrant over those who are faithful, and because they are faithful. **Eat and drink with the drunken.** "The two forms of sin most common to those in high places are oppression and self-indulgence." — *Abbott*. Tyranny over others goes hand in hand with laxity toward ourselves. Persecution of others implies a wrong in us. "The great historical contrast between the Inquisition and indulgences will easily occur to the reader." — *Lange*. So the unfaithful minister, or Christian, takes the very means God has put in his hands for the aid of his kingdom and the blessing of men, and misappropriates them to selfish uses.

The Bad Servant.

50. **In an hour that he is not aware of.** The Lord knows all that is being done, and at the right time will come suddenly, not only in his great second coming, but in all forms of his coming. These are always sudden to the wicked. It is the "usual" that often keeps us from watching.

The Unexpected Coming.

51. **And shall cut him asunder:** literally, *shall cut him in two*. A terrific form of capital punishment, carried sometimes into execution with a saw. (See 2 Sam. 12: 31; Heb. 11: 37.) **And appoint him his portion with the hypocrites;** as referred to in the last lesson. He must go with the hypocrites because he is one. Each to his own place. "The wicked servant is a hypocrite, not only because he thinks to present himself at last under the guise of fidelity, and must have showed false colors from the beginning (*Meyer*), but especially because in his ill-treatment of the fellow-servants, he assumes the semblance of official zeal." — *Lange*. **There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.** This is a phrase often used to denote the bitterest agony and convulsions of pain and rage. — *Jacobus*. The bitterest sting of the punishment is in the fact that he brought it on himself.

VI. Application to Temperance. — **FIRST. THE NEED.** In the troublous times that precede the coming of Christ in his kingdom, the battle with intemperance has no small part. There are "wars and rumors of wars." There are "great tribulations" "and great distress upon the land, and wrath unto this people."

ILLUSTRATION. A magazine of facts, from the *National Temperance Almanac* for 1894.

DIRECT COST of intoxicating liquors,	\$1,000,000,000
INDIRECT COST.	
Lost labor caused by drinking,	440,000,000
Lost labor of liquor dealers	300,000,000
Sickness caused by liquor	100,000,000
Crime caused by liquor	37,500,000
Insanity caused by liquor	17,000,000
Pauperism caused by liquor	8,000,000
	<hr/>
	\$902,500,000

COMPARISONS.

Compare with this list of large expenditures the following table, showing what is spent in the United States for the ordinary necessities of life:—

Bread	\$505,000,000
Meat	303,000,000
Woollen goods	237,000,000
Cotton goods	210,000,000
Boots and shoes	196,000,000
Sugar and molasses	155,000,000

ILLUSTRATION. THE BAR.

Young man! has not your eye been frequently attracted to a sign having the following ominous word on it?—"BAR."

Avoid the place; it is no misnomer. The experience of thousands has proved it to be:

A bar to respectability.

A bar to honor.

A bar to happiness.

A bar to domestic felicity.

A bar to heaven.

Every day it proves to be:

The road to degradation.

The road to vice.

The road to the gambling hell.

The road to the brothel.

The road to poverty.

The road to wretchedness.

The road to want.

The road to robbery.

The road to prison.

The road to the gallows.

The road to the drunkard's grave.

The road to hell.—*Selected.*

ILLUSTRATION. THE HORN OF PLENTY. A brand of whiskey is called "Horn of Plenty." On this a temperance writer remarks that they have chosen the name wisely, for out of the thing designated shall come

Plenty of poverty, plenty of pain,
Plenty of sorrow, plenty of shame,
Plenty of broken hearts, hopes doomed and sealed,
Plenty of graves in the potter's field.

—*The Loyal Legion.*

SECOND. HOW TO ESCAPE. BY PERPETUAL WATCHING. Against the enemies of temperance; against temptation; over the young; for opportunities. If we watch, temperance and all the train of virtues will rule over all the house, over ourselves, and over our country.

ILLUSTRATION. An English temperance orator, when speaking on the subject whether or not it would be possible to close the public drinking-saloons, said: "This is a difficult question, truly, my friends; but we will do well to remember that—

'There's a little public-house which every one may close;
It is the little public-house just underneath the nose.'

ILLUSTRATION. Linnæus said of alcohol that, "Man sinks gradually by this fell poison; first he favors it, then he warms to it, then he burns for it, then he is consumed by it."

THIRD. THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT WATCHING. Destruction to ourselves, to our families, and to our nation.

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LESSON IV.—APRIL 28.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.—MARK 14: 12-26.

Golden Text.—*This do in remembrance of me.*—LUKE 22: 19.

THE SECTION includes the whole story of the institution of the Lord's Supper, chiefly in Mark 14: 12-31; and John chapters 13-17.

INTERVENING STORY.—After his discourses on the Mount of Olives, Jesus continued his walk to Bethany, where he spent Wednesday and Thursday morning in retirement, probably at the home of Lazarus; while the Jewish rulers were conspiring against him. Thursday afternoon he sent two of his disciples to Jerusalem to prepare for the Passover, and toward evening he went there with his disciples.

TIME.—Thursday evening, April 6, A. D. 30. It was the evening after the 14th of Nisan (the day of preparation, and hence called the first day of the feast), and therefore was the beginning of the 15th of Nisan (Friday, April 7), which, according to the Jewish reckoning, commenced immediately after the sunset of the 14th, and was the day on which the Passover was eaten. See diagram in REVIEW.

PLACE.—An upper room in Jerusalem.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matthew 26: 17-30; Luke 22: 7-30; 1 Corinthians 11: 23-25. Compare John 13: 1-30; and read John, chapters 13 to 17.

PASSION DAY (the last day of the life of Jesus).—Nisan 15th. The record of this single day is very nearly one ninth of each of the first three Gospels, and nearly one fourth of the Gospel of John. So in the story of Jesus' three or four years' ministry one seventh is given to the last day (Tuesday, to which day belong Lessons II. and III.). Thus Passion Day must truly be the day of days.

12. And ¹ the first day of unleavened bread, when they killed the passover, his disciples said unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and prepare that thou mayest eat the passover?

And on the first day of ¹² unleavened bread, when they sacrificed the passover, his disciples say unto him, Where wilt thou that we go and make ready that thou mayest eat the passover?

¹ Matt. 26: 17. Luke 22: 7.

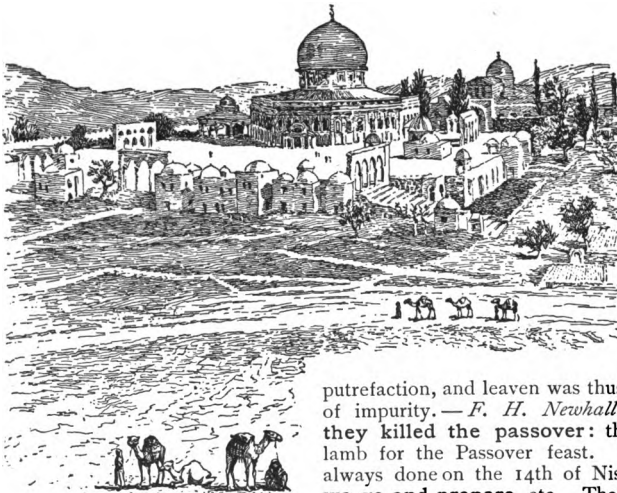
EXPLANATORY.

I. Preparations.—Vs. 12-16. 12. And the first day of unleavened bread, that is, of the Passover celebration, which began on the 14th of Nisan at evening, and continued to the 21st, Exodus

12: 18-20. **Of unleavened bread.** So called because at this feast only unleavened bread was allowed. It symbolized three things. (1) The haste with which they fled from Egypt, not having time to wait for bread to rise (Ex. 12: 34, 39). (2) Their sufferings in Egypt, hence called the bread of affliction (Deut. 16: 3), and hence all the afflictions of the bondage of sin. But (3) chiefly their purity as a consecrated nation, since fermentation is incipient

putrefaction, and leaven was thus a symbol of impurity. — F. H. Newhall.

When they killed the passover: that is, the lamb for the Passover feast. This was always done on the 14th of Nisan. **Where wilt thou that we go and prepare, etc.** That which was required consisted of a room furnished with a table and couches; and for food,



Place of the Upper Room.

13. And he sendeth forth two of his disciples, and saith unto them, Go ye into the city, and there shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14. And wheresoever he shall go in, say ye to the goodman of the house, The Master saith, Where is the guestchamber, where I shall eat the passover with my disciples?

15. And he will shew you a large upper room furnished and prepared: there make ready for us.

And he sendeth two of his 13
disciples, and saith unto
them, Go into the city, and
there shall meet you a man
bearing a pitcher of water:
follow him; and wherso- 14
ever he shall enter in, say to
the goodman of the house,
The Master saith, Where is
my guest-chamber, where I
shall eat the passover with
my disciples.

And he will himself shew 15
you a large upper room fur-
nished and ready: and there
make ready for us.

unleavened bread, bitter herbs, wine, and a paschal lamb, which must be slain in the temple between three and five o'clock (*Josephus' Wars*, VI., 9: 3), and cooked in a private house.

13. And he sendeth forth two of his disciples: Peter and John, according to Luke 22: 8. Jesus himself remained in Bethany. And saith unto them: there can be no question that this direction was given them in superhuman foresight. — *Alford*. **There shall meet you a man bearing a pitcher of water.** The unleavened bread for the Passover is made most carefully by the male members only of the company who are to eat together (*Rev. Ezra Isaac*), and for the purpose of kneading the unleavened bread pure water was solemnly drawn by each family. While drawing it, the man was to utter the words, "This is the water of the unleavened bread." — *Canon Tristram*. This is the reason why, though water was usually drawn by women, here it was a man who drew it. Follow him, and he would lead to the right house and its owner.

THE OBJECT of this direction was probably to prevent Judas from knowing the place in time to betray our Lord at the Passover meal. — *Schaff*.

14. And . . . say ye to the goodman of the house: or, master of the house, not the man they followed. — *Schaff*. "Goodman" is often incorrectly read, as if it were the noun *man* with an epithet of praise before it (*good man*), whereas it is an old English word for *master*, as applied to a householder, husband, or the father of a family. — *J. A. Alexander*. The master of the house was probably a disciple, but secretly, like many others, "for fear of the Jews" (John 12: 42). — *Plumptre*. **The Master.** Literally, *the Teacher*. **Where is the guestchamber?** R. V., *my guest-chamber*: the one designed for my use. This seems to imply "that Jesus had already had some understanding with the master of the house respecting the matter in hand." — *Pres. Dwight*. He may have been a disciple, and glad to welcome Jesus. Others think that the whole, not merely the sign, lay in the supernatural knowledge of Jesus. **Where I shall eat the passover?** This message seems stranger to us than it would to the man, even if he had little knowledge of Jesus. — *Schaff*. During the Passover week hospitality was recognized as a universal duty in Jerusalem; pilgrims and strangers were received, and rooms were allotted to them for the celebration of the feast. — *Abbott*.

15. And he will shew you a large upper room. It is still common in Oriental houses to have the principal rooms in the second story. — *Broadus*. A little group of buildings close to the old minaret in the accompanying illustration is erected over the vault said to contain the tomb of David. An "upper room" over the tomb of the renowned psalmist is called the "Coenaculum," because, **The Upper Room.** tradition holds, the Passover Supper was eaten there by Jesus with his disciples. It is a large chamber, thirty feet wide by fifty feet long, with a well-paved floor. Underneath the first window on the right is a small niche where, it is said, Christ sat at the Passover Feast. If all this is true, then this enclosure witnessed the assemblage of the apostles on the day of Pentecost, the miracle of the cloven tongues "like as of fire," the washing of the feet of his disciples by Jesus, the Lord's Supper and final meeting of Jesus with his disciples. — *Century for May, 1889*. It was so arranged by outside stairs that it could be reached without disturbing the family. **Furnished:** i. e., with tables, the necessary dishes, and couches or mattresses spread around the "low table and covered with damask or tapestry-work (as we see in the best Moslem houses in Damascus at the present day), on which the company reclined while eating." — *Tristram*. **Prepared:** already swept, and clean, and in order for the feast. Even at the present day, the very humblest Jewish family generally has at the Passover time "the walls of the house whitewashed, the floor scrubbed,

16. And his disciples went forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

17. And ¹ in the evening he cometh with the twelve.

And the disciples went 16 forth, and came into the city, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready the passover.

And when it was evening 17 he cometh with the twelve.

¹ Matt. 26: 20.

the furniture cleaned, and all things made to put on a new appearance." (*Mills' British Jews.*) — *Morison.*

16. And they made ready the passover. (See on v. 12.) The two disciples would probably wait for their Master's arrival with the other ten, superintending the preparations. — *Plumptre.*

PRACTICAL (1) Christ can still give minute guidance which in the least details of life will lead us safely. He still exercises the minute providence by which, from most casual conjunctures of events, he can produce the most important issues. — *Glover.* (2) Each of our hearts should be a guest-chamber for the Lord. (3) It is a great privilege to have Jesus dwell in our homes, and to make use of our property, our time, our talents.

II. In the Upper Room. — Luke 22: 14-16.

V. 17. In the evening. Jesus must have started late in the afternoon, and reached the upper room "about sunset, which would be at that season at a little after six. With this sunset began, according to the Jewish reckoning, the day of his death." — *American Commentary.* In this upper room the last Passover was celebrated by Jesus and his disciples. They reclined on couches arranged on three sides of a low table, resting on the left arm, so that the right was free. Their feet were extended away from the table, and were not under it, as with us. The mediæval pictures give us a wrong impression, as, for instance, Leonardo da Vinci's.



Sundial.

(From an old Roman Garden.)

III. The Strife to be First. — Luke 22: 24. *While gathering at the table.* This contention is recorded only in Luke, but is implied as the reason for some of the exhortations in John 13: 1-20, and for the washing of the disciples' feet. The strife probably began when the disciples were assembling in the upper room and were about to take their places at the table. Even in this most solemn hour, more solemn than they realized, there arose a contention among the disciples as to who should be the greatest, probably with reference to the places of honor at the table. It is quite possible that those sought the best places who had received unusual honors, as the three who had been selected for the Transfiguration, Peter, with the keys, Judas, the treasurer, James and John, who had asked to be nearest the King. But, except in Judas' case, we may be sure that the best of motives were mingled with the unworthy ones, and that they wanted to be near him whom they loved; possibly, also, because no one was willing to take upon himself the servile duty of washing the travel-soiled feet of the company.

THE SELF-SEEKING SPIRIT leads to Satan's kingdom, not to Christ's. It is the spirit of hell, not of heaven. It begets evils innumerable and sorrows unspeakable. "Fling away ambition; by that sin angels fell." *Aut Caesar aut nullus*, "to be first or nothing," leads to crimes and wars. It was Milton's *Satan* who said, "Better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven." "How like a mounting devil in the heart rules the unreined ambition!" But distinguish between the strong desire to improve, to have large usefulness, to grow in holiness and love, and the desire to have more honor and power, or even to be better than others. To do the very best we can in everything is our duty.

IV. Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet. — John 13: 1-20; Luke 22: 24-30. Just after all were seated. We gain a very erroneous idea of the meaning of this action if we imagine that it was performed for a mere example of humility, or even as an illustration. It was simply a humble, menial service that ought to have been done by the disciples, but which they refused or neglected to do. "As sandals were ineffectual against the dust and heat of an Eastern climate, washing the feet on entering a house was an act both of respect to the company and of refreshment to the traveller." The disciples sat down to the meal

18. And as they sat and did eat, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you which eateth with me shall betray me.

19. And they began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him, one by one, *Is it I?* and another said, *Is it I?*

And as they sat and were eating, Jesus said, Verily I say unto you, One of you shall betray me, *even* he that eateth with me.

They began to be sorrowful, and to say unto him one by one, *Is it I?*

without washing their feet, after a hot and dusty walk. "The feet-washing should have been done by one of the disciples; the things necessary for it are at hand. The disciples are still disputing who shall undertake to do it. Jesus then rises himself to perform this duty of a servant." — *Tholuck*. "A slave in my bedroom washed my feet. I was struck by the degree of abasement expressed in the act; and as he held the foot in the towel, with his head bowed down towards it, I remembered the condescension of the blessed Lord." No wonder the conscience-smitten disciples were amazed, and that Peter could not endure that Jesus should wash his feet.

CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF HUMBLE SERVICE. We are to imitate not the form, but the spirit of Christ. One may do exactly, in other circumstances, what another has done, and yet entirely fail of imitating his example, because all that made it of value is left out. It is a dead body without the soul. To go through a ceremonial of washing others' feet, as on Thursday in Holy Week in Rome the Pope "washes the feet of a few aged paupers, after due private preparation, in the presence of the proudest rank," is not doing as Christ did at this time. Jesus did not institute a rite, but showed us the true spirit. He that does the humblest service in order to relieve the wants of others, or cleanse their souls from sin; he that forgets himself and seeks no honor, no high place, but only to serve and to help, and seeks out the poor, the sick, the obscure, the unpopular, in order to be their friend and helper — he does to them as Christ did to the disciples.

PRACTICAL. Love to God and love to men transfigure the commonest service, as a gray and dreary cloud is transfigured by the rays of the setting sun. Much that a mother does for her child, a doctor or nurse for his patients, is very lowly service, that would be hard and repulsive but for love. It was such service that has made the names of Florence Nightingale, John Howard, and many others shine like stars in the sky.

V. The Passover. — After this the Passover Feast was celebrated in the usual Jewish manner.

ITS SIGNIFICANCE. (1) It was the anniversary of the birth of the Jewish Nation. (2) It marked the divine favor and protection in preserving their firstborn from destruction. The destroying angel *passed over* the houses on which the blood was sprinkled, or, as some take it, the Jehovah angel *passed over* and stood over the door, and shut out the destroying angel. (3) It commemorated their salvation from the bondage of Egypt, and their separation to a holy life. (4) The sacrifice acknowledged their sin and need of atonement, (5) which they must apply to themselves by faith. (6) The absence of leaven denoted their putting away sin. (7) The bitter herbs were a token of their repentance. (8) The whole foreshadowed the coming of their Redeemer.

VI. The Warning to Judas. — Vs. 18-21. John 13: 21-28. 18. And as they sat and did eat, the Passover, not the Lord's Supper, Jesus said: being troubled in spirit (John 13: 21). The Saviour's heart was touched with the ingratitude of one for whom he had done so much. One of you which eateth with me: an intimate friend; one who was pledged by thus eating with him to be faithful and true. Shall betray me: Judas had already agreed to betray him for thirty pieces of silver; but this announcement (1) gave Judas opportunity to repent. (2) "The words would seem to have been intentionally vague, as if to rouse some of those who heard them to self questioning," whether by their contention they were not in danger of falling. (3) The announcement showed the disciples that Jesus was not taken by surprise, but knew all that was before him. It was part of the great plan of redemption, foretold ages before (v. 21).

19. And they began to be sorrowful:



Pitcher and Basin.

20. And he answered and said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.

21. The ¹ Son of man indeed goeth, as it is written of him: but woe to that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had never been born.

22. And ² as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake *it*, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.

And he said unto them, *It is* one of the twelve, he that dippeth with me in the dish.

For the Son of man goeth, ²¹ even as it is written of him: but woe unto that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed! good were it for that man if he had not been born.

22. And as they were eat- ²² ing, he took bread, and when he had blessed, he brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take ye: this is my body.

¹ Matt. 26: 24. Luke 22: 22.

² Matt. 26: 26. Luke 22: 19. 1 Cor. 11: 23.

because Jesus should be betrayed; because one of their number should fall so low as to be a traitor, and because they were afraid they might be swept onward into doing what now their souls hated. **To say unto him:** to Jesus, *Lord, is it I?* as well as to one another (Luke 22: 23). **One by one, Is it I?** All their want of nobility, all their failure in love, all the depth of their selfishness, all the weakness of their faith, —

“Every evil thought they ever thought,
Every evil word they ever said,
Every evil thing they ever did,”

all crowded upon their memories, and made their consciences afraid. *None* of them seemed safe from *anything*. — *Farrar*. And another said, *Is it I?* Better that question than “*Is it he?*” Better self-condemning watchfulness than censorious pride. This was true self-examination, and showed the right spirit, and was a hopeful sign.

20. **It is one of the twelve, that dippeth with me in the dish.** This did not point out any particular person, but is a repetition of what is said in verse 18. All the disciples dipped their bread with their fingers in the common dish, knives, and forks, and plates being unknown; but the enormity of the traitor's crime was shown by the fact that, “with the false smile of hypocrisy on his face, but with *The Traitor*. rage, shame, greed, and treachery in his heart,” he could perform the rites of sacred hospitality by eating from the same dish with him whom he was pledged to betray. In response to the whispered question of John, who sat next to Jesus, he points out the traitor to him by an act which would attract no notice from the others, because it was an ordinary incident of their daily meal (John 13: 23-36).

21. **The Son of man indeed goeth** (to his death), **as it is written:** in such passages as Psalms 22 and Isaiah 53. He must die if he would save the world. His death was not the result of accident, nor controlled by demons, but “he was delivered up to die by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2: 23). **But woe to that man.** Not a threatening, not an utterance of passion, but a sad statement of a terrible fact, thus giving Judas another opportunity and warning to repent. The appointment of God did not make men less free agents, nor diminish the guilt of treachery or injustice. — *Plumptre*. **Good were it for that man if he had never been born.** Such a life was not worth the living. Observe the incidental confirmation of the doctrine elsewhere taught, that for the finally lost soul there is no redemption. — *Abbott*. For Judas there was no hope of restoration. At this point Satan took possession of Judas, and he went out from the company of disciples to betray Jesus to the chief priests.

VII. **The Warning to Peter.** (Mark 14: 27-31) probably took place during the Passover meal. Judas had gone out, but all needed warning, lest they fall. Peter declared that he would never deny his master, but Jesus warned him that he would thrice deny him before morning.

VIII. **The Lord's Supper Instituted.** — Vs. 22-25. 22. **And as they did eat.** Sometime during the feast. **Jesus took bread.** *Took the loaf* or thin cake of unleavened bread, which was before him. — *Clark*. The bread points to Jesus as the food of the soul. **Blessed.** Invoked God's blessing upon it, as was the wise and pious custom. **And brake it.** Signifying Christ's body broken for us. **Take, eat; this is my body.** Luke adds, *which is given for you* (22: 19); Paul, *which is broken for you* (1 Cor. 11: 24); and both add, *this do in remembrance of me:* signifying not only that Jesus is himself the spiritual bread to them, but also that they in receiving and eating it accept of him and his

The Bread of the Sacrament.

23. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them: and they all drank of it.

24. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many.

25. Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine, until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

And he took a cup, and ²³ when he had given thanks, he gave to them: and they all drank of it.

And he said unto them, ²⁴ This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many.

Verily I say unto you, ²⁵ I will no more drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.

atonement by faith. — *G. W. Clark*. **This is my body**: represents, expresses my body. We interpret it as we do his other sayings: The seed is the word, the harvest is the end of the world, I am the door, I am the vine. — *Bishop Browne*. He said almost the same words a year before he died (John 6: 48-58). The literal eating of Christ's body would be of no value whatever. We are not changed into what we eat. We are not made holier by the best of food, even angels' food, or ambrosia and nectar. And a literal eating would degrade to a mere form a glorious and powerful spiritual truth.

23. **And he took the cup**. Nowhere in the accounts of the Lord's Supper is the word "wine" used, but "cup," "fruit of the vine," so that fresh, unfermented grape juice fulfils all the conditions of this observance, and is even a more perfect symbol than fermented wine. **Given thanks**. From the Greek word thus translated comes *The Eucharist*; i. e., *The Thanksgiving*, as a phrase for taking the bread and wine. Here is one of the wonders of Christ's love, that he could give thanks over the shedding of his own blood. How much more should we give thanks for that marvellous gift of his love, by which eternal life, the blessings of heaven, and everlasting communion with God become ours. **And they all drank of it**: for all would participate in the atoning sacrifice it symbolized. "All" is significant in view of the Romanist usage, which denies the cup to the laity.

24. **This is my blood**. A type or emblem of his blood, his life (Lev. 17: 14), which he laid down as the atonement for sin. The grapes must be crushed and destroyed before the juice or "blood" could be used for the strengthening of the sick. — *Anon*. Observe Christ's solemn and emphatic indorsement by the very institution of the Lord's Supper (1) of the Old Testament doctrine of *The Cup that Symbolized His Death*, i. e., of salvation through the shedding of blood; (2) of the New Testament doctrine that the sins of the world are put away by Christ, not merely through the influence of his life, teachings, and example, but by *his blood poured out for a sinful world*. — *Abbott*. **Of the new testament**: or covenant. The word "new" is omitted in the most ancient manuscript. Covenant is the preferable sense here. It need hardly be remarked that the title of the New Testament is derived from this passage. — *Cambridge Bible*. The new covenant was that God would renew and save all who believed in Jesus. It is the new promise to men, the new gospel dispensation, in which God has used his perfect wisdom in seeking to save the world from sin. **Which is shed for many**. Multitudes, not merely a few, are to be saved by Christ.

25. **Verily I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine**. He would have no more social meals with them. This was his last. His death would come before there would be an opportunity for another. **Until that day that I drink it new**: not new, recently made, wine, but "a new kind of wine, at a new supper," with a new meaning. **In the kingdom of God**: completed and perfected, when all should assemble to commemorate the triumph of Christ and his kingdom, and partake of that which the fruit of the vine foretold and symbolized. It is a prophecy of his final triumph.

THE TEACHINGS OF THE LORD'S SUPPER. This supper is a memorial of a departed Friend, a prophecy of a returning Friend, and a parable, and vision, and revelation of a perpetually present and ever-living and life-giving Friend. — *Abbott*. The celebration of this supper brings to remembrance the leading truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. It holds up to our view the infinite love of God, who gave his only begotten Son.
2. It reminds us that salvation, like the bread and fruit of the vine, is the gift of God.
3. It brings to remembrance the life of Christ, all he was, and did, and said. It makes him a living reality to us. It is an irrefragable proof that he lived and died for us.
4. As the Passover to the Jews, so this supper helps us to realize the grievous bondage of sin from which Christ has redeemed us.
5. It holds up before our eyes the atonement, the sacrifice for sin, the body of Christ broken and his blood shed for us.

26. And ¹ when they had sung a hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.

And when they had sung 26 a hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives.

¹ Matt. 26: 30.

6. It teaches that Christ is the food of the soul. "As our food makes our bodies what they are, and becomes in us bones, and flesh, and sinew, and blood; as our intellectual food makes our minds what they are, coarse or refined, barbaric or cultured, disciplined or wild and riotous, so our spiritual companionship makes our spirits what they are."

7. We realize the most intimate communion with Christ, that we are one with him. This expressive symbolism of oneness in spirit, purpose, suffering, empireship, and being glorified together has been eloquent beyond the power of words for eighteen centuries. — *Bishop Warren*.

8. We must partake by faith, or it will be of no avail.

9. We are taught to distribute to one another the spiritual blessings God gives us.

10. The simplest and most common things of daily life are employed to teach us of Christ, so that all may understand, so that everything shall remind us of him, and the whole daily life may be sanctified and transfigured.

11. By eating together, we learn the blessing and power of the oneness of God's people. "Many as the waves, but one as the sea." Like the radii of a circle, the nearer we are to the center, Christ, the nearer we are to one another. "The Lord committed his body and blood to substances which are formed a homogeneous compound out of many. Bread is made of many grains; wine is produced out of many berries. Herein the Lord Jesus signified us and hallowed in his own table the mystery of our peace and unity."

12. It is a feast of joy. Our last view of Christ in the gospels is not of death, but of victory over death; an ever-living Saviour that once was dead, but now lives. "Nothing less than the actual joy of heaven is above it."

13. It implies a new consecration of ourselves to God in the new covenant.

14. It is a prophecy of Christ's second coming, of the perfect triumph of his kingdom; for we are to celebrate it till he comes. It contains a hope and a promise of victory and heaven.

15. It is the holding up before the world the cross of Christ; not a selfish gathering of a few saints, but a proclamation of the Saviour for all, and that he is our Lord and Saviour.

IX. Parting Words. — John 14. *At the table, and 15, 16, after they had risen from the table, and were about to depart.* These words are full of promises, of comfort, and of instruction; and will ever be read with more interest and helpfulness when we remember the circumstances in which they were spoken.

X. Farewell Prayer. — John 17. *In the upper room toward midnight.*

XI. The Closing Hymn. V. 26. *And when they had sung a hymn.* Probably the usual Psalms (115-118) with which the Passover closed, and which were very fitting to this occasion. "There is no reason to doubt that Jesus and his company followed the custom; and Jesus, as the celebrant, would not only sing, but lead in the singing. (See a strikingly eloquent and sympathetic portrayal of the scene in *Philochristus*, Chap. XXVIII.) — *American Commentary*. They went out into the mount of Olives, for the solitude of the garden of Gethsemane.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

For a discussion as to whether this was the regular Passover, and was held on Wednesday or Thursday eve, see Wescott's *Introduction to the Gospels*, p. 316; Andrews' *Life of Christ*, pp. 367-397; Smith's *New Testament History*, p. 288; Aldrich's *The Day of Our Lord's Crucifixion*; and Newberry's *The Days of the Passover* (Hodder & Stoughton); *The Expositor* for January, 1892, under "The Johannean Question."

For Jewish table customs, see Van Lennep's *Bible Lands*, p. 600. For the Passover, see Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, and Edersheim's *Temple and its Services*, pp. 177-231; Walker's *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation*; Stapfer's *Palestine in the Time of Christ*, pp. 440-446.

Phillips Brooks' *Sermons*, series I., p. 277, "Lord, is it I?"; *My Guest Chamber for the Master's Use* (Revell); Lowell's *Vision of Sir Launfal*, on humble service; Thomas D. Bernhard's *Central Teaching of Jesus Christ*, "Incidents at the Supper" (Macmillan).

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

We can teach the story of the Lord's Supper by taking the events in order, and referring to the Gospels wherever they take up the account. This will give new value to the story, and to some parts of the Gospel, as John 14-17, the story of washing the disciples' feet, and the exhortations to humility.

Illustration. The Palace Beautiful, of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, is the most perfect picture of the church and its ordinances in all literature.

Illustration. EATING TOGETHER. Dr. Hamlin says that one of the greatest difficulties in Christianizing the East is that families do not eat together. It is hard for us to realize how much benefit it is to our families to be gathered together two or three times a day around the table. Nothing but the necessity of eating could accomplish this. Eating together promotes friendship, sociability, generosity, and the intellectual life.

Illustration. "*In remembrance of me.*" At a large dinner party given by Lord Stratford after the Crimean War, it was proposed that every one should write on a slip of paper the name which appeared most likely to descend to posterity with renown. When the papers were opened every one of them contained the name of *Miss Nightingale*! — *W. Dickson*. She was the one who had given herself most fully in the humblest and most self-denying service.

Illustration. "There are said to be two authentic pictures of Dante in the world. A young and celebrated artist wished to honor his city by portraying her noblest sons, and so, among the rest, he painted the face of Dante as a young man twenty years of age, radiant with his opening years, a wreath upon his brow *Portraits of Dante*. and a pomegranate in his right hand. After Dante had passed away, some friend of his made a cast of his face, and from this the other picture has been made. Every wrinkle, every seam that had been made by disappointment and the passage of years was there revealed; this is the picture of an old man, with the dust and injury of the years upon him. But this last, after all, is the real Dante." — *Rev. Nehemiah Boynton*. So it is not merely the child Christ, nor the youthful Christ we need to see, but one bearing our sins, weighted with the burden of the world, yet triumphant over sin and death, — the whole Christ pictured in the Gospels.

Some one has said that "A popular want is a hero who shall appear god-like and divine, and yet exhibit the frailties and vices of man." That is the desire of many, but it is not their need. We need a perfect ideal, ever before us, lifting us up by his abiding presence.

LESSON V. — MAY 5.

THE AGONY IN GETHSEMANE. — MARK 14: 32-42.

Golden Text. — *The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?* — JOHN 18: 11. **THE LAST WEEK.**

The Last Evening.

THE SECTION includes the lesson and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS in Matthew 26: 36-46; Luke 22: 39-46; John 18: 1.

TIME. — A. D. 30, Thursday evening, April 6, about midnight, to about one o'clock Friday morning, April 7. Immediately following the institution of the Lord's Supper.

PLACE. — Gethsemane, a garden on the western slope of the Mount of Olives.

JESUS was beginning the last day of his earthly life. About thirty-three and one half years old.

CIRCUMSTANCES. — We closed our last lesson with those words of heavenly comfort and instruction which the beloved disciple has preserved for us in his Gospel. Closing with a prayer overflowing with tenderness and hope, and with a hymn sung by all, Jesus had completed his work as teacher, and there remained only the steps to the cross, and the atoning work thereon, by which alone his words could become the power of God for salvation.

32. ¹ And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray.

33. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

And they come unto a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I pray.

And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;

¹ Matt. 26: 36. Luke 22: 39. John 18: 1.

(a) Gr., an enclosed piece of ground

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Garden of Gethsemane. — V. 32. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet and with uncovered head approach the scene of to-day's lesson.

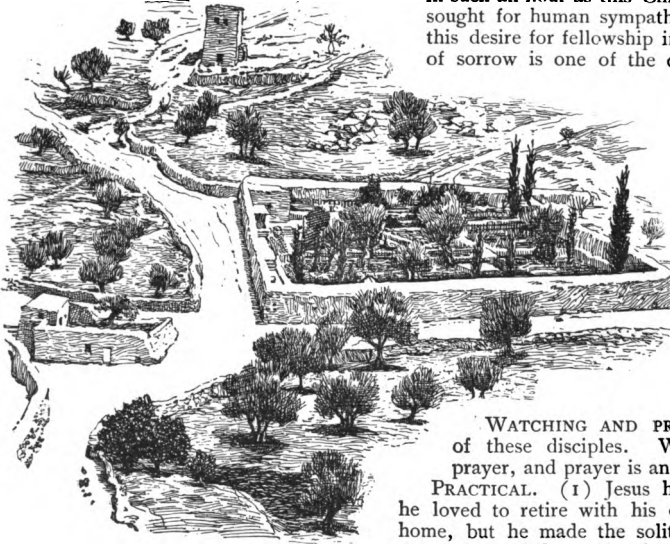
32. **And they came**, from the upper room in Jerusalem, about midnight. To a (Greek, an enclosed piece of ground) which was named Gethsemane, situated across the Kedron from Jerusalem, near the foot of the western slope of Olivet, not far from the present garden of the same name. The present Gethsemane is three quarters of a mile from the wall of Jerusalem, is almost a square, 160 feet feet, and contains eight venerable olive trees. The name means *oil press*, "an emblem of trial, distress, agony," and was given to this garden because there probably was, been, a press there for the manufacture of olive oil. Here, "probably, amidst a variety of fruit trees and flowering shrubs, was a lowly, quiet summer retreat." — *Edersheim*. The fact that "Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples" (John 18: 2) probable that it was a suburban pleasure ground, or belonged to some friend of Jesus gave him the free use of it during his stay.

THE OUTER GUARD. Sit ye here, at the entrance of the garden, while I shall "Go yonder and pray" (Matthew). These were an outer guard. Against surprise to ward off any interruption. Eight of the disciples remained here.

THE INNER GUARD. 33. **And he taketh with him**, a little further into the garden and nearer to the scene of his agony, **Peter and James and John**, the three who had seen his glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, and were best prepared to sympathize with him. "It was not a sign of human weakness that

Need of Human Sympathy. in such an hour as this Christ sought for human sympathy; this desire for fellowship in hours of darkness and of sorrow is one of the deepest

strongest in the human nature. It was in him. The love of his Father rose from his heart and went to the three friends. They had witnessed his glory on the Mount of Transfiguration. They were watching him and praying for him in the hour of his wrestling with death. — *Lyman Abbott*.



Garden of Gethsemane, and road to Mount of Olives.

WATCHING AND PRAYING were the duties of these disciples. Watching is an active prayer, and prayer is an aid to watchfulness. **PRACTICAL.** (1) Jesus had sacred spots where he loved to retire with his disciples. He had a home, but he made the solitudes of the desert his home, and the garden his closet of prayer. Prayer and communion with his Father was

34. And saith unto them,¹ My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch.

And he saith unto them, 34
My soul is exceeding sorrow-
ful, even unto death: abide
ye here, and watch.

¹ John 12: 27.

refuge in the hour of trouble. (3) Jesus was intensely human, as well as divine. And while he must "tread the wine-press alone," it was a comfort to know that both human friends and sympathy were near at hand.

II. The Burden of Sorrow.—Vs. 33, 34. And began to be sore, greatly, amazed. This word "tells not only of amazement, but even of stupefaction from amazement, as if an utterly unwonted feeling were taking possession of his soul, and he knew not what to make of it; the entrance upon a new stage of experience was overcoming him."—*American Commentary*. And to be very heavy, R. V., "sore troubled," a stronger word than the other. It was a climax of sorrow, a deep and terrible anguish.

34. My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death. It was an agony that would destroy his life if it continued. The agony became so great that before it was over "his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground" (Luke). It was "with strong crying and tears" (Heb. 5: 7). "It was his *soul* that was *sorrowful*. The physical sufferings of our Lord were never the chief source of his pain. The true understanding of his agony has been kept away from many minds by a too exclusive attention to the physical part. Physical suffering is more easily understood than spiritual, yet a look at the cross merely in its physical aspects gives us no idea whatever of its true meaning."—*W. N. Clark*.

THE CAUSES OF CHRIST'S GREAT AGONY. "A coarser infidelity has much to say about the shrinking of our Lord from death. Such weakness is pronounced unworthy," in contrast with many a martyr who has gone triumphantly to his cross; and many a hero to whom death has been "welcome as the sight of sky and stars to prisoned men."

FIRST. "It would suffice to answer that Jesus also failed not when the trial came, but before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession, and won upon the cross the adoration of a fellow-sufferer and the confession of a Roman soldier."—*Expositor's Bible*. Nothing could be braver than the way Jesus actually bore his suffering.

SECOND. Courage is not stoical indifference nor insensibility to suffering. It is not that physical prowess which disdains any expression of pain. "The stoic, to whom pain is no evil, and the Indian, laughing and singing at the stake, are partly actors and partly perversions of humanity." "Who is so *True Courage*. hard-hearted as to think less of the valor of the martyrs because it was bought by many a lonely and intense conflict with the flesh?" True courage is of the soul, and is measured by the degree of sensibility to pain, and by the full vision and consciousness of the evil to be endured, together with an unflinching doing of one's duty in the face of all. The most sensitive soul is often the bravest. A friend once called the attention of Napoleon to the blanched face of an officer as he was marching into battle, as showing that he was a coward. Napoleon replied that that man was the bravest officer in his army; for he saw clearly and felt keenly his danger, and *yet went forward into the thickest of the battle*.

The more highly organized any being is, and the more capable he is of the highest joy, so much the more is he sensitive to pain. There are bodies to which a rough touch is more painful than a spear-thrust to others; a musician is tortured by a discord unnoticed by others. Thus all pain, whether physical or spiritual, was more intense to Jesus than to others. His "physical organization, unblunted by one deviation from natural ways, undrugged by one excess, was surely capable of a range of feeling as vast in anguish as in delight." But Jesus never hesitated, never turned back from the way of the cross.

THIRD. Some of the elements entering into this hour of anguish were: (1) Into this one hour were crowded by prevision the combined horrors of the passion, its cruelty, its shame, its physical torment, its spiritual tortures.—*Abbott*. (2) He felt with the greatest intensity the sin of the world. The wickedness of Judas, the weakness of even his chosen ones, the best on earth, the crimes of the Jewish leaders soon to be wrought against himself, their measureless folly in rejecting their Messiah, their only hope, the terrible evils soon to come upon the whole nation brought before his soul the most awful results of sin upon the human race. It was the unspeakable horror of a world throwing away heaven and hope, and trampling on the most radiant manifestation of love God himself could make

*Sources of Christ's
Agony.*

35. And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.

36. And he said, ¹Abba, Father, ²all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: ³nevertheless, not what I will, but what thou wilt.

And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass away from him.

And he said, Abba, Father, ³⁶ all things are possible unto thee; remove this cup from me: howbeit not what I will, but what thou wilt.

¹ Rom. 8: 15. Gal. 4: 6.

² Heb. 5: 7.

³ John 5: 30; 6: 38.

to them. It was the mother-heart burdened with the sin and ingratitude of her son who smites her for her efforts to save him. (3) I cannot help feeling that part of Christ's state of mind in the garden was owing to the deep, awful sense of responsibility, the conception of the supreme importance to man of his standing firm at this crisis. There never was so great a crisis, and he was aware of its length and breadth. — *President Woolsey*. "The great horror of Jesus in the garden arose, not from fear of Calvary, but from fear of failure (through physical suffering) to reach Calvary, and so lose all for which he left heaven." — *Schauffler*. (4) "Jesus was in the prime of manhood; life was just opening before him; his soul was eager for work, and conscious of rare capability to perform it; his death was the end of all human hope of achievement." — *Abbott*. (5) At the same time, his earthly career, in this dark hour, may have seemed to be a failure, if the future was veiled from his vision. Only a few disciples, instead of a glorious kingdom, and these few about to forsake him. Where were the fruits of his life? (6) Sadler thinks that to Jesus, the Lord of life, physical death itself, decay, the penalty of sin, was intensely repugnant.

III. **The Prayer of Trust.** — Vs. 34-36. **Tarry ye here, and watch** (with me, Matthew). Keep awake to keep me company, and act as guard against intrusion.

35. **And he went forward a little**, about a stone's cast (Luke) 150 or 200 feet, to be alone and yet near to human sympathy. **Fell on the ground.** Luke, *kneeled down: i. e.*, as in the East, with the head bowed forward to the ground. The natural position of agonizing prayer; because in that position no thought whatever need be given to the body, but mind will be wholly concentrated on the object of prayer. "When the flail of affliction is upon me, let me not be the chaff that flies in thy face, but the corn that lies low at thy feet." — *Philip Henry*. **Prayed that, if it were possible.** If it were possible to save men, and carry out the divine work of redeeming them, and bringing in the kingdom of God, in some other way than by his suffering and death. Might not God find some easier way? **The hour might pass from him.** All the sufferings before him that were realized in this hour.

36. **Abba.** The Aramaic word for **Father**, the very word that Jesus used. *Father* is a translation of *Abba*. The two equivalent words appear together in Romans 8: 15 and Galatians 4: 6. — *American Commentary*. **All things are possible**, but they may not be wise and good. But his Father was the All-Powerful, and if the cup was not removed it was not from want of power. **Take away this God's Will, Not cup from me.** The cup **Ours.**

represents the coming hours as holding all the agony and sorrow which were upon him and before him. To desire its removal even with intense longing was perfectly right. **Nevertheless, not what I will, what I desire and wish by itself, but what thou wilt**, that is my



Old Olive Trees.
(In the Garden of Gethsemane.)

37. And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst not thou watch one hour?

38. Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. ¹ The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak.

And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldst thou not watch one hour?

(b) Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.

¹ Rom. 7: 23. Gal. 5: 17.

(b) Or, Watch ye, and pray that ye enter not.

prayer and desire. I do not merely submit to thy will, but desire it, pray for it. He could easily have escaped. He could have had the twelve legions of angels for his defence (Matt. 26: 53). Underneath that awful agony there lay, millions of fathoms deep, unmoved and immovable, the intense desire that his Father's wish and will should be done. That wish and will were in reality his own." — *Morison*. This prayer, "Thy will be done," contains the essence of faith; a faith that expects an answer, and calmly trusts God as to the kind of answer.

IV. **The Answer to Christ's Prayer.** — V. 42; Luke 22: 43. There were three answers to the prayer of Jesus.

FIRST, the angel strengthening him (Luke) was a direct answer. There are two ways of answering a prayer for the removal of a burden. In one, the burden is taken away, and we remain the same; in the other, we are made so strong that the burden is no longer a burden to us; as what would crush a child is but sport to a man. The latter is by far the best way of receiving an answer. Paul kept the thorn in his flesh, but God's grace was made sufficient for him. Jesus going on to the cross (v. 42) shows that the answer was given.

SECOND, he had most intimate communion with God. By his trouble, and his prayer, he came close to his heavenly Father. This is one of the best answers to prayer, and is one of the reasons why prayer is commanded, and circumstances continually occur in our lives urging us to prayer. Moreover, there was this answer. That God's will was done as he asked. Both wills were blended in one.

THE THIRD answer to prayer is the giving, not that which we ask for in the form we ask it, but the soul of our prayer, the thing we in our deepest hearts want, and would ask for if we saw all things as God sees them. If clearly before the vision of Jesus there had appeared two choices, the one of escape from the cross, but with that also the failure of his mission, the triumph of evil, the loss of unnumbered souls, no crown, no glory, no abiding on the right hand of God; and the other choice, that of the cross and its agony, but with it also the redemption of the world, the ineffable glory of God, the joys of millions of the saved, the crown of triumph over evil, — who doubts which would have been his real, innermost prayer. His prayer was answered, for the cross was changed to a crown, Gethsemane into paradise, death into immortal glory.

V. **The Weary Watchers.** — Vs. 37-42. 37. And he cometh to the place where he had left the three to watch. He did this three times during this awful hour, apparently to come into touch with their human sympathy as they should watch and pray with him. **And findeth them sleeping.** Luke, the physician, gives the cause; it was from sorrow. Their very grief, not stupidity nor indifference, made "their eyes heavy" (Matthew). We are to remember that it was very late, after midnight, long after their accustomed hour of sleep; they had been amid very exciting scenes, with their minds intensely strained, and now a reaction had come, of silent stillness and darkness. *The Disciples sleeping.* And yet we cannot help feeling that if they had had a deeper sympathy with Christ and a fuller realization of the crisis, they would have kept awake, and not been found sleeping on guard. Christ's gentle reproof implies this. **Simon, sleepest thou?** who had made such loud professions, and who had been so specially warned; thou the most wide awake and active of all! **Couldst not thou watch one hour?** "It was the failure of Peter which most keenly affected Jesus, not only because his professions had been so loud, but because much depended on his force of character." — *Chadwick*. "Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none" (Psa. 69: 20).

OBSERVE they forgot sorrow in sleep. Christ conquers it by prayer. Compare with the world's forgetfulness of sorrow the Christian's victory over it (Rom. 5: 3; 8: 35-39). — *Abbott*.

38. Watch ye, keep awake, be on your guard; let every faculty be on the alert. And

39. And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words.

40. And when he returned, he found them asleep again (for their eyes were heavy), neither wist they what to answer him.

41. And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, ¹ the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

42. ² Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

And again he went away, 39 and prayed, saying the same words.

And again he came, and 40 found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they wist not what to answer him.

And he cometh the third 41 time, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: it is enough; the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

Arise, let us be going: be- 42 hold, he that betrayeth me is at hand.

¹ John 13: 1.

² Matt. 26: 46. John 18: 1, 2.

pray. Let your hearts be open to heaven and its influences, as well as to earth's. Use every possible means of help and defence in this your hour of need.

NOTE 1. The double duty; watching and praying must go together. As Jay says, "Prayer without watching is hypocrisy; and watching without prayer is presumption." Their best work of guardianship was to build a wall of prayer.

NOTE 2. Prayer is one of the means which enables us to keep awake and watchful.

Ye enter not into temptation. The enemy was close at hand. Spiritual dangers and temporal dangers, far beyond their conception, were secretly preparing to assail them. To *enter into temptation* is to enter into its spirit, its atmosphere. It is more than to be tempted; it is to let the temptations gain a lodgment in the spirit, as the malaria enters into those who, being susceptible, enter into malaria. "The ship is safe in the water so long as the water is not in the ship." The soul can endure temptation if the temptation has not entered into the soul. They were to pray for faith and courage, and the conscious presence of God, and for strength and love, which would preserve them from entering into temptation even while amid the strongest temptations. **The spirit truly is ready**, to do right, willing. **But the flesh is weak**: the body, the physical nature, with all its natural tendencies and susceptibilities. These words are not merely a loving excuse for the drowsiness of the disciples; but "they exhibit a reason why our Lord's disciples should give themselves to watchfulness and prayerfulness." For the weaker the flesh, the more they needed to be on their guard, and to have the aid of heaven.

Entering into Temptation.

39. Again he went away. There were three successive seasons of prayer, broken only by the rest of returning to his disciples. He gave them opportunity to retrieve their first error. **Spake the same words.** For he had the same needs, and these words best expressed them.

40. Their eyes were heavy, with sleep, and, though they tried to keep awake, their spirits were not strong enough to resist drowsiness. **Neither wist they**, etc. They were too confused at their being again found sleeping, during this hour of their Master's distress, to make any reply. They had no excuse to offer, and remained silent under his reproof. — *Owen*.

41. Sleep on now. The battle is over, I have gained the victory, and there is no further need of your watching and praying on my account. **Take your much needed rest.** It is enough, of watching on this occasion. The guard is dismissed. Then follows a pause for a time. Then, perceiving that his enemies were at hand, he says, **The hour is come.** Or the pause may have been after **Take your rest.** Then after a brief time Jesus says, **It is enough**, of sleep, for the hour, of betrayal, is come.

42. Rise, let us be going, to meet his enemies. He was ready for the sacrifice.

LIBRARY HELPS.

Weiss, Edersheim, and others on the *Life of Christ*; Merrill's *The Reasonable Christ*, Chaps. X., XI. (Silver, Burdett & Co.); F. W. Farrar's *Silence and Voices*, "Prayer the Antidote to Sorrow." On "watching and prayer," Sprague's *Lectures to Youth*; H. W. Beecher, Series 7, "Physical Hindrances to Spiritual Life." On the bloody sweat, see Farrar's, *Life of Christ*, Chap. IX. Phelps' *Old Test. Studies*, p. 117; *Poem*, "Strive, yet I do not promise"; Trench's *Poems*, "The Suppliant"; Foster's *Cyclopadia of Illus-*

trations, I., 5974-5984, 3464; Bertram's *Homiletic Cyclopaedia*, 5058, 5087, and 3616. Augustine's *Confessions* gives an illustration in his own experience of how his mother's prayer was answered.

LESSONS FROM GETHSEMANE.

1. Every life has its Gethsemanes of sorrow, and may have its victories. "Wherever a great thought is born, there has been Gethsemane."

2.

*Alone, that worn-out word, —
Yet all that poets sing, and grief hath known
Of hopes laid waste, knells in that word, Alone.*

— *Bulwer.*

3. Prayer is not conquering God's reluctance, but taking hold of God's willingness. — *Phillips Brooks.*

4. There is no sin in shrinking from what is painful, save when the shrinking is so violent that it resists the clear will of our Father. — *Cumming.*

5. The essence of faith in God is to say, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." It trusts God wholly, both as to the time of answer and the kind of answer.

6. God's will is always infinitely better for us than our own. "God always answers in kind or in kindness." No one is wise enough to insist on having his own will.

7. We have here an example of the way God answers some of our prayers.

8. "Be sure it is something more than surface feeling, something more than impulse; it is good, honest, sober, considerate, patient *principle*, stayed up by prayer, that alone can remain awake, and outwatch the stars, and wait through the darkness, and conquer temptation." — *F. D. Huntington.*

9. Satan always rocks the cradle when we sleep at our devotions.

10. It is a sad thing for the church to be sleeping while Christ is suffering and praying.

11. The best people find the least fault with their brethren, and are the most ready to find excuses for the failures of others.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

All that belongs to this experience should be brought together to the minds of the scholars.

SUBJECT: GETHSEMANE AND ITS VICTORY.

I. THE BURDEN OF SORROW (vs. 32-34).

CONTRAST with the revelation on the Mount of Transfiguration.

COMPARE with the temptation in the wilderness, at the beginning of Jesus' career.

Illustration. In the heathen fable Orpheus goes down, lyre in hand, to the Plutonic realm, to bring back again to life and love the lost Eurydice; but Jesus, in his vicarious sufferings, goes down to hell itself, that he may win back from their sins and bear in triumph to the upper heavens a lost humanity.

Illustrations. In an article in the *Century* for June, 1888, we are warned against misjudging as to courage. Moral courage, not indifference to danger, is the highest form of courage. Two soldiers were charging up a hill with their regiment, in a desperate attempt to capture a battery. "When half way up, one *True Courage.* of them turned to the other, and said, 'Why, you are as pale as a sheet. You look like a ghost. I believe you are afraid.' 'Yes, I am,' was the answer; 'and, if you were half as much afraid as I am, you'd have run long ago.'"

"A locomotive engineer on an Eastern railroad, who was always selected for his nerve, . . . and whose courage, repeatedly displayed in appalling accidents, was proverbial, was afraid in the quiet of his own home to go upstairs alone in the dark."

One of the bravest officers in the Civil War, who had treated shot and shell with an indifference that had made him a marvel of courage, was in perpetual fear on a steamboat. Often the timid, who dread the smallest things, are far more courageous than those who physically have no thought of fear.

II. THE PRAYER OF TRUST (vs. 35, 36).

Illustration. An example of the folly of insisting on our own wills, is found in the prayer of the Israelites in the wilderness for meat, which was answered by the flight of quails.

III. THE WEARY WATCHERS (vs. 37-42).

Illustrations of entering into temptation. Malaria. Bacteria disease germs, we are told, are everywhere around us, but only when they lodge in some favorable soil do they develop into disease.

IV. THE ANSWER TO PRAYER. (See *Explanatory*.) "The writer of these lines knew a young invalid whose back required to be burned in four places by a red-hot iron. For several days and nights she rebelled against this terrible operation, and said to God and man, 'I cannot!' One night, after an earnest prayer, strength was given her to consent, — to consent so fully that when I saw her in the morning she was perfectly calm; and this calmness never ceased for a single moment until the operation was finished." — *F. Godet*.

LESSON VI. — MAY 12.

JESUS BEFORE THE HIGH PRIEST. — MARK 14: 53-64.

Golden Text. — *He is despised and rejected of men.* —

THE LAST WEEK.

ISA. 53: 3.

The Trial.

THE SECTION includes Mark 14: 43-72 and the **PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.** — Matthew 26: 47-75;

Luke 22: 47-65; John 18: 2-27.

OLD TESTAMENT. — Isaiah 53: 1-8.

TIME. — Early Friday morning, April 7, A. D. 30, between 1 and 5 o'clock.

PLACE. — The palace of Caiaphas, the high priest, at Jerusalem.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — An'nās; Cā'īaphās (Kā'yā phās, or Kā ī'ā phās); Cē' drōn (Sē'drōn), or Kē'dron, or Kid'ron (all referring to the same valley); Gēth-sēm'ā-nē; Is-cār'i-ōt; Māl'chūs (Māl'kūs).

53. ¹ And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

And they led Jesus away 53 to the high priest: and there come together with him all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.

¹ Matt. 26: 57. Luke 22: 54. John 18: 13.

EXPLANATORY.

The Arrest. — *At the entrance to the garden of Gethsemane, about one o'clock Friday morning* (Mark 14: 43-52; John 18: 2-12).

JUDAS guided a multitude, with swords and staves, lanterns and torches, under the direction of the chief priests and elders, and accompanied by a guard of soldiers to the garden of Gethsemane, and there betrayed his Master with a kiss, stealing "the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil in."

JESUS presented himself to them, and requested them to let his disciples go their way.

THE OFFICERS arrested Jesus and were leading him away.

PETER, in his determination to stand by his Master as he had promised, made an attack with his sword upon the officers, and cut off the ear of Malchus, a servant of the high priest, thus implicating Jesus in a seeming rebellion against Rome, and giving color to the charge of the Pharisees that he was setting up a worldly kingdom against Caesar. Jesus undid the evil by healing the wound and bidding Peter put up his sword.

THE DISCIPLES then all forsook Jesus and fled away into the darkness.

The Preliminary Examination before Annas. — V. 53. *Palace of the high priest, Caiaphas. Between one and two o'clock Friday morning.* 53. And they led Jesus away to the high priest. Jesus was led first to Annas (John 18: 13), who, though deposed by Rome, was still the legitimate high priest according to the law of Moses, the office being for life (Num. 20: 28; 35: 25), and may have been so regarded by the Jews. Annas appears to have possessed vast influence in so much that five of his sons became high priests, and his son-in-law, Caiaphas, was now the acting high priest appointed by the

54. And Peter followed him afar off, even unto the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

55. And ¹ the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.

56. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.

And Peter had followed 54 him afar off, even within, into the court of the high priest; and he was sitting with the officers, and warming himself in the light of the fire.

Now the chief priests and 55 the whole council sought witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found it not.

For many bare false wit- 56 ness against him, and their witness agreed not together.

¹ Matt. 26: 59.

Romans. Apparently the leaders wanted his authority and sanction. Probably very little was done here beyond this.

The Trial before Caiaphas, and an Irregular Meeting of the Sanhedrim. *In the palace of Caiaphas, one to three o'clock Friday morning.* Annas very soon sends Jesus to Caiaphas, the high priest (v. 24), and he, while waiting for the council to assemble, asks Jesus some questions about his teaching and his disciples. Jesus replies that it was easy for him to find out all about these, for everything had been done in public. Whereupon, an officious officer, who stood near, struck Jesus with the palm of his hand (John 18: 19-23).

I. **The Court.**—Vs. 53, 54. And with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes. It was against the rules of Jewish law to hold a session of the Sanhedrim or council for the trial of capital offenses by night. Such an assembly on the night of the paschal supper must have been still more at variance with usage. The present gathering was therefore an informal one,—probably a packed meeting of those who were parties to the plot; Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathæa, and probably not a few others, like the young “ruler” of Luke 18: 18, not being summoned. — *Ellicott*.

The Sanhedrim was composed of seventy members, “chief priests, that is, the heads of the twenty-four priestly classes; scribes, that is, rabbis learned in the literature of the church; and elders, who were chosen from amongst the most influential of the laity.” — *Abbott*. The priests were there, whose greed and selfishness he had reproved; the elders, whose hypocrisy he had branded; the scribes, whose ignorance he had exposed; and, worse than all, the worldly, sceptical Sadducees, the most cruel and dangerous of opponents, whose empty sapience he had confuted. — *Farrar*. “It was a packed jury, a star chamber of self-appointed assessors.”

PETER FOLLOWED AFAR OFF. 54. And Peter followed him afar off with John (John 18: 15), after having recovered in some measure from their first alarm. He partially tried to keep his promise, *sat with the servants*, in the open court of the palace.

Following Christ afar off is dangerous: (1) it leads into temptation; (2) it leads away from the source of help and strength; (3) it brings the weakness of an evil conscience. Those follow Christ afar off (1) who follow from curiosity; (2) those who are far from Christ in spirit and sympathy; (3) those who do little for the conversion of the world for whom Christ died.

II. **The Difficulty of Making Up a Case Against Jesus.**—Vs. 55. The council sought for witness against Jesus. Not to ascertain the truth; they did not desire that. But, “having secured their prisoner, they must first agree upon the charge,” and this must be sufficiently grave to make the penalty death. And found none. “It was no easy matter; for not only had his life been stainless, but he had shown consummate skill in avoiding all the entanglements which had been set for him.” — *Expositor's Bible*. There must be two witnesses (Deut. 19: 15), and probably no two witnesses could be found, out of the ranks of the disciples, who had ever heard out of his own lips an avowal of his Messiahship. — *Andrews*.

A POSSIBLE ARRAY OF WITNESSES. What an array of witnesses they might have found had they wished to learn the truth! here a company of those who had been lame, but now were running to tell the story of their healing; there a band of those who had been blind, but now could see; lepers who had been cleansed; demoniacs clothed, and in their right mind; sick raised from their beds, and dead brought to life again; sad hearts comforted; sinful souls redeemed; ignorant minds enlightened; wandering ones restored. It is still the same; many men refuse to look at the true witnesses for the gospel which are many and strong.

III. **False Witnesses Summoned.**—Vs. 56-59. 56. For many bare false witness against him. This was easy to bring about; in fact, they had no doubt been for

57. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,

58. We heard him say, I will ¹ destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.

59. But neither so did their witness agree together.

60. And ² the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?

And there stood up certain, and bare false witness against him, saying, I heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands.

And not even so did their witness agree together.

And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what answerest thou which these witness against thee?

¹ Mark 15: 29. John 2: 19.

² Matt. 26: 62.

(a) Or, sanctuary.

some time hunting up witnesses (Matt. 26: 4). Anywhere in Asia, not to speak of countries, there are hangers-on about the courts ready to sell testimony. — *Broads.* **their witness (or testimony) agreed not together.** And therefore was a failure as condemning Jesus was concerned. Falsehoods seldom agree. Only the truth monious.

57. **And there arose certain.** At last they found two (Matthew) who seem to agree, and have a charge of some weight. **And bare false witness.** The testimony false (1) because the facts were not correctly reported, and (2) because they were misapplied and perverted. This is a very common way of bearing false witness to our neighbor. "The perjury was all the more perjured because it bore some distant semblance to truth."

58. **We heard him say, I will destroy this temple,** etc. The utterance of tending to bring the temple into contempt was regarded as so grave an offence that it would have formed a capital charge against the first martyr, Stephen (Acts 6: 13). — *Mt.* The Jews idolized the temple. Note that his accusers were obliged to go back three to the very opening of his ministry, to find what they might even *call* testimony (2: 19). This was either misunderstood, dimly remembered, or wilfully perverted.

NOTE in reference to this charge (1) that Christ had not said so; he had said (John 19) that the Jews would destroy the temple, which he would restore; (2) that they understood, at least partially, that he had referred to his own body (Matt. 27: 40, 63). — (3) The promise to restore the temple proved that he had no hostility to it, and his clear it had shown how much he cared for it.

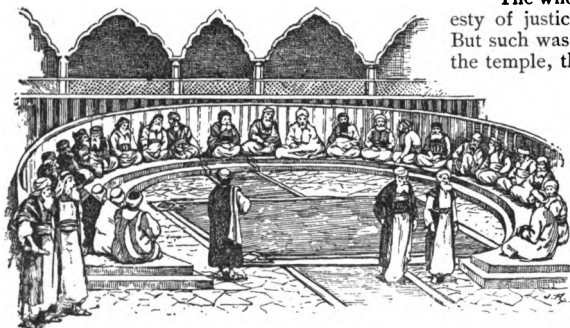
FALSE WITNESSES AGAINST CHRIST. The false witnesses against Christ did not agree with that generation. Opposers still are bearing false witness. They continually distort what Christians believe what they do not believe. They distort the doctrines of Christianity. They make contradictions in the Bible where there are none. They set forth the faults of Christians without giving them credit for their virtues. They impute to Christianity done by bad men in the name of Christianity. Sometimes even professed followers bear false witness against Christ, by unchristian deeds, by neglect of duty, by worldliness.

"The whole proceedings were a hurried testimony of justice, unconstitutional, and so illogical. But such was the virulent hate of the hierarchy against the temple, they were prepared to break through all legalities to gain their end."

They would even break the tables of the law themselves, if they might have stoned the Nazarene in fragments, and then buried him under the rubble. — *Rev. H. Burton, B. A.*

IV. The Challenge

Jesus. — Vs. 60-62. 60. And the high priest stood up in the midst. He moved forward into the open place where Jesus was, surrounded



Sanhedrim in Session.

61. But ¹ he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again ² the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

62. And Jesus said, I am: and ³ ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and saith unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?

And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.

¹ Isa. 53: 7.² Matt. 26: 63.³ Matt. 24: 30; 26: 64. Luke 22: 69.

the circle of the members of the Sanhedrim, as if to browbeat him into breaking his silence, which was so impressive. No doubt the effort to find witnesses must have taken no little time; at least an hour was consumed, for Peter's denials during the trial were about an hour apart (Luke 22: 59). Witness after witness was tried, and failed. The high priest was becoming impatient. **And asked Jesus.** He was determined to force him to criminate himself. **Answerest thou nothing?** Silence was the best reply, for it permitted the false witnesses to contradict themselves, and nothing drew the attention away from these contradictions. Indeed, there was nothing to say. The witnesses answered one another. And any explanations Jesus could make would only give the rulers something which they might be able to pervert.

61. **But he held his peace.** "In the silence itself we may perhaps trace a deliberate fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah 53: 7. In 1 Peter 2: 23 we find a record of the impression which that fulfilment made on the disciples."—*Plumptre*.

ANSWERING NOTHING. Jesus made no reply because a reply would have been useless. They would not accept a denial, and they would have perverted the meaning of any explanation he could make. He refused to "cast pearls before swine," or to "give that which was holy to dogs." There are many times when it is well for the church to imitate their Master in this. Do not waste time and strength in replying to blatant infidels who are determined to oppose Christianity under all circumstances.

Replying often advertises the enemy; and arguments take the attention from the main work of the gospel, the saving of the world from sin. Attend to the business of the church, save men from sin, culture them into a noble character, help the needy, visit the sick, preach the gospel, and the works of Christianity will answer its enemies. **The high priest asked him.** He was baffled at every point. There was no hope of formulating a charge unless Jesus himself could be induced to say something which could be perverted into blasphemy. "According to Matthew, it was a solemn oath that the high priest offered him: 'I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell us.' As much as to say, 'I put you under oath, that you may clear yourself of the charge that you have made this claim,' but meant as an opportunity for him to make the claim afresh."—*American Commentary*. **Art thou the Christ (the Messiah), the Son of the Blessed?** "The Blessed was a common title for God among the Jews."—*American Commentary*. It is evident from John 19: 7 that "the Son of God" was understood to mean the Messiah, and that claiming to be the Son of God was considered blasphemy.—*Broadus*. The difficulty of this question consisted in this: if he *confessed* that he was the Son of God, they stood ready to condemn him for blasphemy; if he *denied* it, they were prepared to condemn him for being an impostor, and for deluding the people under pretence of being the Messiah.—*Barnes*.

V. Jesus Acknowledges Himself to be the Messiah.—V. 62. And Jesus said, **I am.** Silence is now impossible. It would be taken as a denial of his Messiahship. "The high priest has given him the opportunity of proclaiming his gospel in presence of the council, and he will not lose it, though it seal his condemnation. 'He cannot deny himself.'"—*Gibson*. Now, if they kill him, they must kill their Messiah. Would it not be better to walk cautiously and examine his claims before they went further? **And ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power:** a sharer in omnipotence, having all power at his control; in contrast with his present apparent weak-



High Priest.

63. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64. Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

And the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What further need have we of witnesses?

Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? And they all condemned him to be worthy of death.

ness. Now they have the power, then he will have it; now they are on the judgment seat and he at the bar, then he will be the judge and they will be the criminals before him, to answer for the actions of this day. "Referring to the well-known Messianic prophecy in Daniel 7: 13, 14, his answer means, 'I am the Messiah, and you shall see me acting as the predicted founder of the everlasting kingdom.' — *W. N. Clarke*. And coming in the clouds of heaven. This expression and the previous one refer (1) to the judgment on them and their city forty years later, as Jesus foretold (Matt. 16: 27, 28; Mark 9: 1; 13: 30) that he would come in the clouds of heaven while some of his disciples still lived, and doubtless some of those present in the judgment hall lived to see that terrible day. (2) They refer to the great judgment day at the end of the world, when every one must give an account of the deeds done in the body. (3) They refer to the triumph of his kingdom and the salvation which he came to bring. The emphasis is rather here than on the judgment. In the midnight darkness he foretells the dawn when

"Out of the shadows of night
The world rolls into light;
It is daybreak everywhere."

VI. Jesus Sentenced on the Charge of Blasphemy. — Vs. 63, 64. 63. The high priest rent his clothes, both the outer garments (*ta himatia*, Matthew) and the inner garments (*tous chitonas*, Mark). — *American Commentary*. Thereby expressing in a tragic manner how it tore his heart to hear such "blasphemy." — *Gibson*. It is evident that this was a piece of hypocritical acting. — *Sadler*. The act was almost as much a formal sign of condemnation as the putting on of the black cap by an English judge. — *Plumptre*. What need we any further witnesses? They had called but one true witness; his testimony they rejected, and yet on the strength of his testimony they were about to condemn him! 64. Ye have heard the blasphemy, by making himself equal with God (John 10: 33). This charge was of no value before the court of Rome, but was that on which they based their own decision. What think ye? This was a formal putting the question to vote. And they all condemned him to be guilty of death. The vote was unanimous, only those having been called to this irregular night meeting who were in sympathy with the chief priests. The legal punishment for blasphemy was death (Lev. 24: 16; compare Deut. 18: 20).

VII. Peter Denies His Lord. — *Palace of Caiaphas*. Two to three o'clock Friday morning (Matt. 26: 69-75; Mark 14: 66-72; Luke 22: 55-62; John 18: 15-17, 25-27). It was while the trial of Jesus was proceeding before the high priest that Peter denied his Lord. To understand the position of Peter, we must remember that Oriental palaces are built around an open quadrangular court; sometimes there is a large room open in front to this court. Peter and John were in the court near the fire, where they could see Jesus and watch the proceedings. The first two denials were in the early part of the trial. The third denial must have been about three o'clock, toward the close of this first trial, for it was about an hour after the others (Luke 22: 59), and at the hour of cock-crowing.

"O thou child of many prayers,
Life hath quicksands, life hath snares."

To understand this scene we must put all the narratives together, remembering that probably Peter was beset and worried by a crowd of menials, some saying one thing, and some another, and that the accounts of Peter's answers are the condensed substance of what he said.

OBSERVE (1) The depth and intensity of Peter's repentance. (2) Contrast it with the false repentance of Judas. (3) After a season of bitter sorrow, Peter was fully pardoned and restored (John 21: 15-17). (4) Peter was permanently changed for the better. (5) The sincerity of his repentance was proved by a long life of devoted service to his Master. (See, for instance, Acts 4: 8; 12: 3-5.)

VII. Adjournment Till Dawn. — The Sanhedrim was forbidden to investigate any capital crime during the night, and, according to the Roman law, a sentence pronounced

before dawn was not valid. This test vote, however, they considered as settling the question. — *Schaff*. The council now adjourned, to meet at daybreak, when they could legally pronounce the sentence.

VIII. Mockery of Jesus. — *In the court of Caiaphas' palace. From three to five o'clock Friday morning* (Matt. 26: 67, 68; Mark 14: 65; Luke 22: 63-65). When the preliminary examination was through, and the informal meeting had adjourned, there was a period of waiting for at least two hours before the formal meeting of the Sanhedrim could take place. During this interval Jesus was insulted, and struck, and shamefully treated by the crowd. In the original no less than five forms of beating are referred to by the evangelists in describing this pathetic scene. Low natures love to trample on those who have fallen from a higher estate. The claims of Jesus seemed a great contrast with his present condition.

IX. The Formal Vote. — Matthew 27: 1; Mark 15: 1; Luke 22: 66-71. *In the council chamber of the Sanhedrim. Daybreak, or about half past five Friday morning.* This regular session was a brief one. The evidence was repeated, and a formal vote taken, and Jesus was taken to the Roman court before Pilate, for the necessary approval of the sentence.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Some *Harmony* is almost essential to the best understanding of these lessons, such as those by Dr. Broadus (Armstrong, \$1.50), by Robinson, revised by Professor Riddle (Houghton and Mifflin, \$1.50). *Christian Thought* (Magazine, N. Y.), for 1888, contains a discussion by Pres. Kemp P. Battle, LL. D., of the University of North Carolina, "of some of the trials and judicial proceedings mentioned in the New Testament"; Lew Wallace's *Ben Hur* is a real aid to understanding these perilous times; so is the *Prince of the House of David*. See Bulwer's *Poems*, "Judas"; Edersheim's *Life of Christ*, "A Study of Judas"; Professor Greenleaf's *Testimony of the Evangelists* gives three accounts of the trial of Jesus: one by Salvador, from the Jewish point of view; one by M. Dupin, a French lawyer; and one by Professor Greenleaf, of the Law School of Harvard University. Wayland's *Salvation by Christ*, "The Fall of Peter"; Tholuck's *Light from the Cross*, "Peter's Apostasy"; Belfrage's *Sacred Discourses*, "Christ's Kingly Glory Ridiculed."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Vs. 55-58. Unbelievers try to find, not the truth about Christianity and the Bible, but only evidence against them.
2. And in order to obtain this, they have to pervert and misapply science, philosophy, and the sayings of the Bible, and the practice of the church.
3. V. 59. Those who make objections do not agree together, but the objection of one opposer is devoured by the objections of another opposer; as the giants that sprang from the dragon's teeth, which Cadmus had sown, destroyed one another, and the one who was left helped him to build his city.
4. V. 60. There is a time to be silent, under false accusations, and refute them only by our lives. "Speech is silvern, silence is golden."
5. V. 62. We should openly confess our purposes and hopes at the proper time, when to keep silent would be treason to the truth and the cause. Then "speech is gold, and silence is death."
6. V. 63. Those who condemn others unjustly, really pronounce condemnation on themselves.
7. There is a time coming when the true causes and reforms, now weak, shall be mighty in power; when religion, and truth, and righteousness shall have sway over those who now rule by worldly power, and rank, and wealth. The weak things of God shall confound the mighty.
8. "It takes very little evidence to convince a man in the line of his prejudices. It would take more evidence than he will listen to, to convince him against those prejudices. It is a man's attitude toward evidence, rather than the evidence itself, that ordinarily measures the practical value of evidence." — *Trumbull*.
9. Peter denied Christ once, and wept forever after it. We often deny him, and never weep for it at all. — *St. Augustine*.
10. You have followed him in his sin; now go and follow him in his repentance. — *St. Ambrose*.

11. Bad men love to ridicule those who are better than they, to quiet their consciences when awakened by the nobler example.

12. Scarcely anything hardens the heart more than scoffing and jeering at religious persons and sacred things.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

If possible, have a HARMONY before you in studying these lessons. (See *Library References.*)

Form a vivid PICTURE of the scenes.

FOLLOW the course of history as given above.

APPLY the truth to the scholars.

Illustration. *The Betrayal.* Draw a circle with several radii. In the center write *Betraying Christ*, and on each radius write one of the things which lead or tend to this great crime, as *love of money, self-seeking, spiritual sleeping, neglect of duty, disobedience.*

Illustration of Judas in Poe's *Raven*, with its sad refrain of "Never more," especially the last stanza.

Illustration. CHRIST'S TRIAL NOW BEFORE THE WORLD. (1) Against him are charged the misunderstandings of his teachings, the faults and imperfections of his followers, its other worldliness, etc. (2) In reply may be arrayed all that Christianity has accomplished in the world,—the changes of character in men, the education, the works for the poor, the hospitals for the sick, the comforts of Christian civilization. The map of the world itself refutes the charges.

Illustration. THE PHARISEES FINDING NOT THE TRUTH, BUT WHAT THEY SOUGHT FOR. President Thwing says, "A Christian man going into a strange city will find Christian things. A bad man going into a strange city will find bad things. An Englishman, returning from India, depreciated the work of the missionaries, saying that he had never seen a missionary. Asked what his purpose was in India, he answered, 'To kill tigers.' A missionary who heard the remark said, 'I have been in India ten years, and I never saw a tiger.'" According to the reasoning of the traveller, there can be no tigers in India. Mrs. Leavitt says that people see missions as one would come to one of our schoolhouses after school is out, and declare that no one goes to school.

Illustration. CHRIST'S SILENCE. If you had a bent tube, one arm of which was of the size of a pipe-stem, and the other big enough to hold the ocean, water would stand at the same height in one as in the other. Controversy equalizes fools and wise men in the same way—and the fools know it. — *Oliver Wendell Holmes.*

Illustration. PETER'S FALL. Many Christians are like the Leaning Tower of Pisa, — as far gone from uprightness as it is possible to go without toppling over. The world is much more likely to pull over the Campanile at Pisa than the Campanile to lift the world. — *Sunday-School Times.*

Illustration. PETER'S REPENTANCE. It is a touching and beautiful tradition, true to the sincerity of Peter's repentance, if not as a historical reality, that, all his life long, the remembrance of this night never left him, and that, morning by morning, he rose at the hour when the look of his Master had entered his soul, to pray once more for pardon. — *Gettie.*

LESSON VII. — MAY 19.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE. — MARK 15: 1-15.

Golden Text. — *But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.* — MARK 15: 5.

THE LAST WEEK.

The Trial.

THE SECTION includes Mark 15: 1-19; Matthew 27:

1-30; Luke 23: 1-25; John 18: 28-40; 19: 1-16.

TIME. — Early Friday morning, April 7, A.D. 30, the day of the crucifixion.

PLACE. — The judgment hall of Pilate, probably in the tower of Antonia, just outside the northwest corner of the temple area, in Jerusalem.

RULERS. — Tiberius Caesar, emperor of Rome (17th year); Pontius Pilate, governor of Judea (5th); Herod Antipas, of Galilee (34th); Caiaphas, high priest.

A HARMONY is of great advantage here, for we study the whole story of the trial of Jesus as found in the combined account given by all four Gospels.

It has been noted that the account in Mark of the trial before Pilate is less rich in graphic description than usual with him, probably because Peter, whose story of Christ Mark is supposed to be recording, could not have been so close an observer of the incidents which immediately followed his denial of Christ. At this time he may have been "weeping bitterly" over his fall.

1. And ¹ straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.

And straightway in the morning, the chief priests with the elders and scribes, and the whole council, held a consultation, and bound Jesus, and carried him away, and delivered him up to Pilate.

¹ Psa. 2: 2. Matt. 27: 1. Luke 22: 66; 23: 1. John 18: 28. Acts 3: 13; 4: 26.

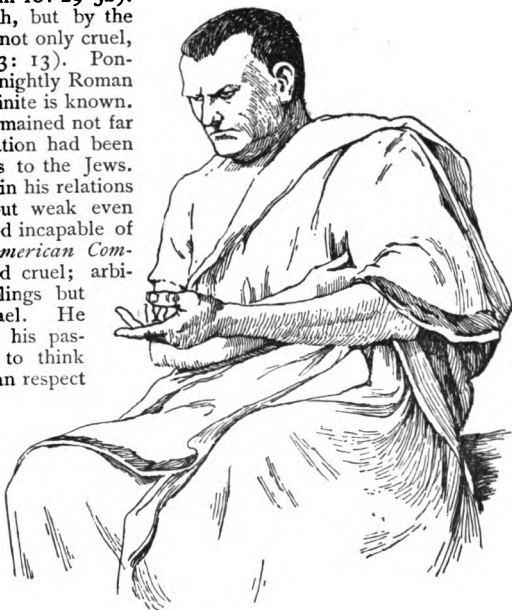
EXPLANATORY.

I. Jesus Brought to Pilate for His Sentence. — *From the palace of Caiaphas to the pretorium of Pilate, in the tower of Antonia or in a part of Herod's palace. About half-past five o'clock in the morning* (v. 1; Matt. 27: 2; Luke 23: 1, 2; John 18: 28). **1. The chief priests held a consultation, etc.** This meeting of the Sanhedrim was for the formal ratification of the result reached in the meeting of the council described in our last lesson, which could not give a legal sentence before sunrise.

THE PRISONER. Bound Jesus. The shackles which had been put upon Christ at the time of his arrest (John 18: 12), and which he still wore when he was led away from Annas to Caiaphas (John 18: 24), would seem to have been wholly or partially removed during the trial. — *Meyer*. Now he is bound more formally, and, according to old tradition, with a cord around his neck. — *Cook*.

THE JUDGE. And delivered him to Pilate, expecting that he would without hesitation confirm their own sentence (John 18: 29-32). They not only wanted him put to death, but by the Roman method of crucifixion, which was not only cruel, but would brand him as accursed (Gal. 3: 13). Pontius Pilate belonged to an ancient and knightly Roman family. "Of his early history nothing definite is known. He came to Judæa about A. D. 26, and remained not far from ten years in office. His administration had been marked by frequent and needless insults to the Jews. His character was but too well illustrated in his relations with our Lord, — not altogether bad, but weak even while stubborn; wilful, yet vacillating, and incapable of perceiving high truth and purity." — *American Commentary*. "He was sceptical, cold, and cruel; arbitrary in his acts, and cherishing no feelings but those of contempt for the religion of Israel. He was, however, a Roman judge; and until his passions were excited, there is no cause to think that he would not show the usual Roman respect for law." — *Schaff*. "The laws of the Romans were the best in the ancient world, so equitable that they still rule the majority of civilized nations, and are permeating our common law." — *Kemp P. Battle, LL. D.* His capital was at Cesarea, but during the great feasts the governor was accustomed to go up to Jerusalem to keep order.

THE ACCUSATION. The Jews carefully suppressed the *religious grounds* on which they had condemned our Lord, for



Pontius Pilate.

2. And ¹ Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest it.

3. And the chief priests accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.

4. And ² Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5. ³ But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

And Pilate asked him, ² Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering saith unto him, Thou sayest.

And the chief priests accused him of many things.

And Pilate again asked ⁴ him, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they accuse thee of.

But Jesus no more answered anything; inasmuch that Pilate marvelled.

¹ Matt. 27: 11.

² Matt. 27: 13.

³ Isa. 53: 7. John 19: 9.

these could have no influence with a Roman court. Before Pilate they brought an entirely different charge, which if it had been true would have been the very reason they would have desired the release of Jesus as they did of Barabbas. The accusation they brought was threefold, involving the charge of TREASON, the greatest crime known to Roman law." (1) Seditious agitation; (2) prohibition of the payment of the tribute money; and (3) the assumption of the suspicious title of 'King of the Jews' (Luke 23: 2)." — *Maclear*. "Of the three points of accusation, (2) was utterly false; (1) and (3), though in a sense true, were not true in the sense intended." — *A. Carr*.

II. The First Examination before Pilate. — Vs. 2-5. Fuller in John 18: 28-38. **FIRST. PILATE HOLDS AN INTERVIEW WITH THE JEWS outside the judgment hall.** About six o'clock A. M. (John 19: 14, which refers to the beginning of Pilate's trial, and is according to the Roman notation, like the modern, and not the Jewish.) *Jesus within the judgment hall* (Luke 23: 2; John 18: 28-32). The Jews refused to go themselves into the prætorium, because their Jewish traditions (not the law of God) declared them ceremonially unclean if they entered the house of a Gentile during or just before the Passover feast. This interview is reported by John.

SECOND. PILATE HOLDS A PRIVATE CONFERENCE WITH JESUS. About six o'clock A.M., within the prætorium. *The Jews without* (vs. 2-5; John 18: 33-37). **2. And Pilate asked him, going within the court room. Art thou the King of the Jews?** as these Jews accuse you of claiming. In all four Gospels these are the first words of Pilate to Jesus, and in all four there is an emphasis on "thou." — *Cambridge Bible*. As if Pilate would say, in astonishment, dost THOU, despised, forsaken, without a single follower, without weapons or wealth, claim to be King of these Jews? And yet "Christ had claimed to be king; promulgated laws; organized in the heart of Caesar's province the germ of an imperishable kingdom; entered Jerusalem in triumph, hailed by the throng as King of the Jews." — *Abbott*. **Thou sayest it.** This is not to be taken as a doubtful answer, but as a strong affirmation. — *Alford*. Jesus' answer of defence (John 18: 34-38) is that he is a king, but that his "kingdom is not of this world," therefore (it is inferred) the "perversion of the people" was not a rebellion that threatened the Roman government. John's description of this interview is very interesting.

THIRD. A SECOND CONFERENCE OF PILATE WITH THE JEWISH LEADERS. *Outside the judgment hall.* Pilate goes out again to the Jewish leaders and reports the result of his conference with Jesus. He publicly declares the innocence of Jesus. There are no grounds for condemning him to death. And yet he fears to offend the Jews by releasing him. A battle is raging within Pilate between conflicting interests. Verses 3 to 5 are the record of this second conference.

3. And the chief priests accused him of many things. See THE ACCUSATION above, and Luke 23: 5. They repeated their charges and put forth every possible argument. Jesus seems to have been brought out to the Jews to hear their accusations.

5. But Jesus yet, no more, after what he had said to Pilate (more fully recorded by John) answered nothing. He had replied to Pilate's questions in the judgment hall, for there was some chance of fairness there. But reply would be useless to those who had determined to kill him, no matter what he said. (See *Jesus Answers Nothing*. last lesson.) **So that Pilate marvelled.** Matthew says, *marvelled greatly*. Jesus had spoken freely to him when alone; why should he refuse to answer now? How could he be calm and silent amid this storm of accusations. It was a silence only possible to an exalted nature full of self-control. An athlete con-

6. Now ¹ at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7. And there was *one*, named *Bárabbas*, *which* lay bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8. And the multitude crying aloud began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9. But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

Now at (a) the feast he used to release unto them one prisoner, whom they asked of him.

And there was one called 7 *Barabbas*, *lying* bound with them that had made insurrection, men who in the insurrection had committed murder.

And the multitude went up 8 and began to ask him *to do* as he was wont to do unto them.

And Pilate answered them, 9 saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

¹ Matt. 27: 15. Luke 23: 17. John 18: 39.

(a) Or, *a feast*.

sious of his strength is not disturbed by the barking of curs or the gibes of children. Jesus, conscious of his divine power, able at any moment to have twelve legions of angels for his defence, maintains a calm and impressive silence. Pilate, knowing nothing of his true nature, cannot comprehend the mystery.

III. **Pilate Sends Jesus to Herod; the Second Mockery.**—*Herod's palace; a little after six o'clock Friday morning* (Luke 23: 5-12). This is Pilate's second effort to release Jesus, his *first*, the declaration of his innocence, having failed with the Jews. Hearing Galilee mentioned as a part of the country where Jesus had stirred up the people, Pilate next attempts to escape from his perplexity by delivering Jesus up to Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, who was then visiting in Jerusalem. The Jews vehemently accuse Jesus. Herod questions him at length, but Jesus refuses to say a word. Then Herod and his men of war mock his claims to be king, and array him in royal robes, and send him back to Pilate. So this effort of Pilate ends in failure.

IV. **The Second Trial Before Pilate.**—Vs. 6-14. *Judgment hall in Castle Antonia; between six and seven o'clock Friday morning.* Jesus within, the Jews without the hall (Matt. 27: 15-18; Luke 23: 13-19; John 18: 39, 40). On Jesus' return to his jurisdiction, Pilate again summons the chief priests and elders, and tells them that Herod agrees with his decision that Jesus has done nothing worthy of death. He still is afraid to release him without the consent of the chief priests, and hence makes a *third* attempt to save himself from condemning an innocent man without throwing any slight upon the action of the Sanhedrim. This was suggested by the people loudly calling upon him to release the accustomed prisoner (v. 8).

6. Now at *that* feast he released (was accustomed to release) unto them one prisoner. Annually at that feast, and fittingly to the nature of the feast. Thus it has been a custom in the Massachusetts State Prison to release one or two prisoners every Thanksgiving Day. Whomsoever they desired, or asked. The choice lay with them.

7. There was one named *Barabbas*, son of *Abbas*. Lay bound in prison, with them that had made insurrection. Matthew says he was a celebrated prisoner. Barabbas was plainly a ringleader in one of those fierce and fanatic outbreaks against the Roman domination which fast succeeded one another in the latter days of the Jewish commonwealth.—*Trench*. This would naturally make him a favorite. He probably had attractive and popular qualities, like bold Robin Hood, of English history; but he was reckless, and probably had committed robbery and murder (Luke) under the name of patriotism. "One of the latest insurrections had been occasioned by the act of Pilate in taking the money from the sacred treasury, dedicated to God under the name of 'Corban' (Matt. 15: 5, 6; Mark 7: 11), for the construction of aqueducts, whereby he brought water to Jerusalem from the distance of four hundred furlongs (*Josephus' Wars*, II., 9: 4)."

8. And the multitude crying aloud. Rather as R. V., *went up*; that is, they thronged about the hall, and were clamorous. Do as he had ever done, that is, release the prisoner they had asked. Now was Pilate's *Jesus or Barabbas*. opportunity for a *third* effort for the release of Jesus. According to Luke 23: 13-15, Pilate assembled the rulers and the multitude, and declared before them that Jesus was innocent, as judged both by himself and Herod.

9. Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews? This expression "was probably an attempt to enlist the patriotic feelings of the multitude."—*Plumptre*. They liked those who led in attempts to deliver them from the power of the Romans; while at the same time Pilate knew that there was no political danger to be apprehended from Jesus.

10. For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

11. But the ¹ chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12. And Pilate answered and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews?

For he perceived that for ¹⁰ envy the chief priests had delivered him up.

But the chief priests stirred ¹¹ up the multitude, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

And Pilate again answered ¹² and said unto them, What then shall I do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews?

10. The reason why Pilate appealed to the people directly is now given. Pilate **knew** that the chief priests had delivered Jesus for envy, on account of his influence with the people which threatened their own power. If Jesus was such a favorite with the people, perhaps they would vote for him to be the one chosen for release.

THE DREAM OF PILATE'S WIFE. At this juncture, while the people were deciding whom to choose, it is probable that the messengers came from Pilate's wife declaring her dream, and entreating him not to condemn Jesus (Matt. 27: 19).

THE CHOICE OF BARABBAS. 11. The chief priests moved, stirred up, the people. The Greek word for earthquake (*siesmos*) is derived from this verb. The leaders caused an upheaval of opinion, appealing to the fears, prejudices, and passions of the people. We learn from Matthew 27: 21, John 18: 40, that the people made a distinct choice of Barabbas. They cried out, "Away with this man." "Not this man, but Barabbas." Thus, by a strange irony of fate, the hierarchy obtain the release of a man guilty of the very political crime with which they charge Christ, — sedition. — *Cambridge Bible*.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light."

JESUS SCOURGED (John 19: 1). During the interval while the Jews were making their choice, Pilate had Jesus scourged with the terrible Roman flagellum, whose lashes were loaded with pieces of lead, spikes, bones. Perhaps this was done to touch the hearts of the people, so that this cruel punishment might suffice instead of crucifixion.

JESUS MOCKED THE THIRD TIME (John 19: 2, 3). During this interval the soldiers took occasion to mock Jesus, dressing him up in a cast-off royal robe, and putting a crown of thorns on his head.

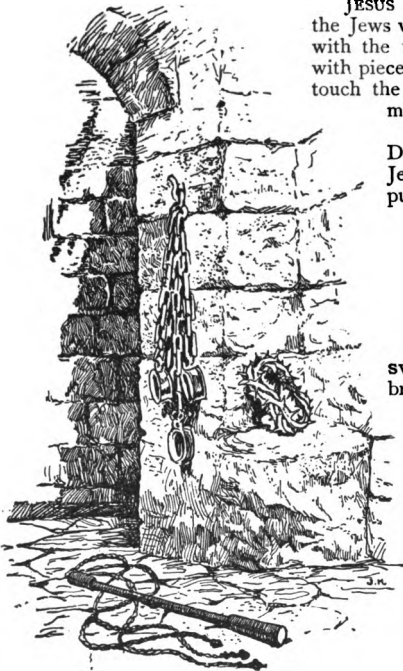
NOTE the whole hymn: —

I see the crowd in Pilate's hall,
I mark their wrathful mien;
Their shouts of "Crucify" appall,
With blasphemy between.

— *Sabbath Hymn Book*, 747.

THE QUESTION OF PILATE. 12. And Pilate answered, after he had learned the decision of the people, bringing Jesus out before them, with the crown of thorns and purple robes (John 19: 5, 6). He said, *Ecce homo*, behold the man. Thinking that perhaps this would suffice for them.

ECCE HOMO. Lo, here is innocence suffering for guilt, for us; here is the Son of God, and the Son of man; here is the noblest exhibition of love; here is a perfect example; here are all the highest virtues in their highest exercise; here is the fulfilment of ages of prophecy; here is the atonement in progress for the redemption of man; here is the central battle, and here is to be the central victory of the universe. What will ye then that I shall do unto him whom ye call the King of the Jews, whom you see before you?



Fetters, Scourge, and Crown of Thorns.

13. And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

And they cried out again, 13
Crucify him.

And Pilate said unto them, 14
Why, what evil hath he done?
But they cried out exceedingly,
Crucify him.

Pilate asked this question where he had no right to. He should have asked it of his conscience, of justice, of right, of truth, of honor, not of an excited mob. So men now ask questions about duty in this same wrong way.

WHAT SHALL I DO WITH JESUS? This is a question every person

must answer. (1) Every person must do something with Jesus. He must accept or reject him. (2) Some try to escape this decision: (a) by refusing to decide, but that is deciding against him; (b) by the substitution of other virtues in the place of believing in Christ; (c) by laying the blame on others, on circumstances, on temptations; (d) but it is all in vain. There is no avoiding the responsibility. Each one for himself must decide whether he will receive or reject the loving Saviour, whom he knows he ought to love and obey. (3) To reject Christ is to reject the sum and soul of all goodness. (4) Rejecting Christ is the great sin of the world. (5) Christ is rejected from wrong and selfish motives. (6) There will come a time when there will be a somewhat different question to answer, — What shall I do *without* Jesus? In the hour when we feel our sins unforgiven; in the hours of sickness, need, death; in the day of judgment; who then can endure to do without Jesus, his forgiving love, his divine help, his comforting presence?

13. And they cried out again, Crucify him. A tumultuous shout, "To the cross, the cross."

14. Why, what evil hath he done?

What excuse is there for crucifying him?

But it was all in vain. They only cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

PILATE WASHES HIS HANDS, AS A SYMBOL (Matt. 27: 24-26). Just before Pilate gave his final decision, he took water, and washed his hands publicly before the people, thus expressing in symbol what he uttered in words, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person; see ye to it." But this action and these words in no degree removed the responsibility and the guilt from Pilate's soul. There was no way of evading them, or casting them upon others, and he stands in history as the man who crucified the Son of God, even while knowing and confessing his innocence.

THE FATE OF THE MURDERERS. It is proper here to note the fate of the murderers of Jesus. Judas died by his own hand. Pilate was soon recalled, degraded, banished to Gaul, where he committed suicide. The tower from which he is said to have precipitated himself is still standing. Herod died in infamy and exile; Caiaphas was deposed the next year. — *G. W. Clark*. "The house of Annas was destroyed a generation later by an infuriated mob, and his son was dragged through the streets, and scourged, and beaten to his place of murder." — *Farrar*. When Pilate had washed his hands to clear himself of the guilt of the murder of Jesus, the whole multitude cried out, "His blood be upon us and our children." And it was upon them. Some thirty years later, and on that very spot, was judgment pronounced against some of the best in Jerusalem; and among the thirty-six hundred victims of the governor's fury, of whom not a few were scourged and crucified right over against the prætorium, were many of the noblest of the citizens of Jerusalem. — *Ederheim*. Some of the wicked rulers and raging populace who that day cried "Crucify him!"



Ecce Homo Arch.

15. And ¹ so Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

And Pilate, wishing to ¹⁵ content the multitude, released unto them Barabbas, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.

¹ Matt. 27: 26. John 19: 1, 16.

and thousands of their children shared in the unparalleled horrors of the destruction of Jerusalem (forty years later, A. D. 70). — *Clark*. And this was not from revenge or retaliation. It was in spite of all that love could do. The Jews, had they accepted Jesus as their king, might to-day be walking as kings and princes in the earth, and their city the central light of civilization. They rejected their king, and lost their kingdom, and it never will be recovered till they acknowledge Jesus to be their Saviour and King.

V. The Sentence of Crucifixion Pronounced. — V. 15. John 19: 6-16. The Jews insisted on the crucifixion, because they said to Pilate that by their law he was guilty of death, having claimed to be the Son of God. This alarmed Pilate, and he made still greater efforts to release Jesus. But when the Jews threatened him with the charge of treason, "If thou release this man thou art not Cæsar's friend," Pilate yielded, willing, wishing to content or satisfy the people, and delivered Jesus to be crucified. "The report to the emperor was probably in the usual brief form: Jesus, a Jew, was brought before me by the Sanhedrim, convicted of treason against the emperor, and crucifixion asked for; execution ordered." — *K. P. Battle*.

REASONS FOR PILATE'S COURSE. "He was weighed in the balances and found wanting." *For releasing Jesus:* (1) Pilate had some conscience left, but it would have been of little avail unless it had been reinforced by (2) the whole bearing and character of Jesus, and by (3) his superstitious fears, and the warning from his wife's dream. (4) Pilate's position as judge under Roman law, which boasted of its justice, (5) the danger to himself, from an act of bald injustice, which might be reported to Cæsar, as the Jews had more than once threatened him before, and once had sent a deputation to the emperor. (6) The Jews had exasperated Pilate, and he was quite willing to displease them if he could with safety.

For delivering him up to crucifixion: The real reason why Pilate did this great act of injustice was, his fear that through the enmity of the Jews he would lose his position, authority, rank, and wealth, and even his life. "He feared that they might really go to the emperor and impeach him with respect to other acts of his government, — his corruption, his acts of insolence, his habit of insulting people, his cruelty, his continual murders of people untried and uncondemned, and his never-ending and gratuitous and most grievous inhumanity." — *Dods*. "At this hour in Palestine we have similar conditions. The magistrate's tenure of office is most insecure, depending wholly on the favor or caprice of higher authorities." — *Rev. William Ewing*. Had he not feared exposure, he would have marched his cohort across the square and cleared it of the mob and defied the Sanhedrim. — *Dods*.

PILATE'S FAILURE. All Pilate's efforts were in vain, because he sought not to do right, but to get permission from the people to do right. He desired a substitute and an evasion, instead of making a bold decision for the right. He would do right if he could do it without too great a cost. He would obey his conscience, if he could do it safely, and without loss. Very possibly he imagined that he was quite a moral man, on account of this tenderness of conscience and his efforts to do right. And yet he has been pilloried in history as a monster of iniquity. For the very test question of true morality is whether we will do right when it costs to do right, when selfish interests and pleasures must be made subservient to duty.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

The *Harmonies of the Gospels* and the *Works* on the trial of Jesus, referred to under the last lesson. Fergusson's *Temples of the Jews*, p. 176, on the place where Jesus was tried by Pilate; *The British and Foreign Evangelical Review*, 1869, on "Pilate and His Times in the Light of Indian Experience"; Jacox' *Scripture Proverbs*, p. 206, "Cato on Silence"; Parker's *Things Concerning Himself*, p. 266; R. Candlish's *Scripture Characters*, "Pilate Judging Our Lord"; *Sermons* by Robertson, Series 1, "The Kingdom of the Truth," and "The Scepticism of Pilate"; by H. W. Beecher, Series, 1, "What Will You Do with Christ?" *The Hymn*, "I see the crowd in Pilate's hall."

LESSONS FROM THE TRIAL BEFORE PILATE.

1. Jesus was the true King of the Jews. By rejecting him they rejected their true kingdom, and hope, and glory, to receive loss and destruction as a nation.

2. Jesus is our true king. To accept him as our king is to receive a kingdom and eternal glory; to reject him is loss and death.

3. Pilate and the Jews threw away the great opportunity of their lives.

"Of all sad words of tongue or pen,
The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

4. It is useless to present arguments to the reason of men who are acting from other motives. The argument necessarily misses the mark in such a case. Hence it is that arguments are seldom the means of converting an opposer to Christianity; for his infidelity is not based on reason.

5. The fact that any one is charged with wrong is no proof that wrong in any degree has been committed. The proverb is that "Where there is much smoke there must be some fire"; but enemies may cast up the dust of accusation in the air till it seems like smoke, and that is not proof of fire.

6. There is little assurance that any one will do right who merely tries to remove the obstacles to right doing, but is not determined to do right at all hazards.

7. There was one simple way for Pilate to escape a conflict, and that was to do his duty fearlessly.

8. All his subterfuges were of no avail. By doing wrong the very evils came upon him to escape which he had done wrong.

9. *Fear* is not so much the motive of men in becoming Christians as it is the reason why men do not become Christians.

10. Note the inconsistencies of unbelief. The Jews condemned Christ for the very things for which they chose Barabbas.

11. The best of causes are often misrepresented and ridiculed by putting them in a wrong light, and misunderstanding their nature, their plans, and their work.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

This lesson can be taught by a series of PICTURES or SCENES.

The large chromo of Munkaczy's (*Münkát'sé*) famous picture of *Christ Before Pilate* (American Tract Society) or even the smaller engravings will aid the teacher in presenting this lesson.

SUBJECT: WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH JESUS?

NOTE WHAT THE RULERS DID. Why they did. The results.

NOTE WHAT PILATE DID, and the lessons we learn from it.

NOTE WHAT THE SOLDIERS DID in mockeries.

NOTE WHAT THE PEOPLE DID, shouting "Crucify," and the results.

CONSIDER the ways in which men now treat Christ. What we should do to him.

Illustration. "Legend has it that Pilate, in extreme misery, cast himself from an Alpine peak into a mountain lake. The mountain is still called by his name, Pilatus, and a glittering lake, which reflects its dark shadow, bears the shape of the glorious cross."—*Prof. Battle*.

Illustration. **SCOURGING.** "The scourging of prisoners accused of misdemeanors, to force them to confess, prevails still. The value of confessions so extorted would not, one would think, be great. Yet the torture not seldom elicits the information wanted. Mr. C. M. Doughty tells of a case he witnessed, when travelling southward with the great Haj pilgrimage from Damascus. A servant, an aged man, was accused of stealing some forty pounds sterling from his Persian master. Called before an extemporized court, he was at once put to the torture. He was laid prone; men held his legs; some kneeled on his shoulders, and kneaded him without pity. Strokes, administered with a tough plant, resounded through the camp, mingled with the screams and groans of the struggling wretch. Four strong men exhausted themselves, and a fifth was handling the plant with fresh vigor, ere the culprit confessed; then he was borne forth, amid the curses of the company, to show the spot where he had buried the treasure. The accused was in this case guilty; but, innocent or guilty, he upon whom suspicion lights will be treated in the same way."—*Rev. William Ewing*, in *Sunday-School Times*.

Illustration. CONTRASTS. So many of Christ's sufferings are set forth as bringing to us corresponding benefits that we may take each one as having its counterpart in our salvation. He was sold, that we might be bought again—that is, redeemed. He was denied, in order that he might confess us before his Father. He was bound, in order that he might bestow upon us true freedom—the freedom of sons. He was unjustly judged, in order that we might escape the severity of God's judgment. He was scourged, that by his stripes we might be healed. He was crowned with thorns, in order that we might receive a crown of glory. He bore the cross, in order that our poor bearings of the cross might be accounted suffering with him. He was crucified, in order that through his grace we might crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts. He died, that we might live.

Illustration. MOCKERIES. Many of the best things in the world have been ridiculed in their beginning. The first steamboat, the first steamer across the Atlantic, the first missionaries, progress in theology, new discoveries in science and medicine.

The early poems of Wordsworth were criticised as being next to idiotic. Byron says that this poet wrote so naturally of the *Idiot Boy* that he must be the hero of his own tale. Tennyson's early volume of poems, *The Poems of Two Brothers*, was a failure. Irving's first book manuscript was refused. *Jane Eyre* was again and again rejected. A publisher advised Miss Alcott, after reading one of her first manuscripts, to "stick to teaching."—*Hezekiah Butterworth*, in *Our Sunday Afternoon*.

LESSON VIII.—MAY 26.

JESUS ON THE CROSS.—MARK 15: 22-37.

Golden Text.—*While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*—ROM. 5: 8.

THE SECTION.—The whole story of the crucifixion.—MARK 15: 20-47 and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Matthew 27: 31-66; Luke 23: 26-56; John 19: 16-42.

TIME.—Friday, April 7, A. D. 30. The crucifixion lasted from 9 A. M. to 3 P. M.

PLACE.—Calvary (Golgotha), just outside the city of Jerusalem, probably on the north, at the Grotto of Jeremiah.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Ar'imāthē'ā; Cāl'vāry; Cyrē'nē; Cyrē'nēan; Elī'ās; Elō'ī lāmā' sā'bāchthā'nī (ch=k); Gōl'gōthā; Māgdālē'nē.

22. And ¹ they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

And they bring him unto ²² the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.

¹ Matt. 27: 33. Luke 23: 33. John 19: 17.

EXPLANATORY.

"When the angel of the Eternal appeared to Moses in the burning bush, he forbade him to approach without taking his shoes from off his feet; 'for,' said he, 'the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.'"

"The cross is also a burning bush,—a furnace in which the Lamb without blemish is consumed. Let us not approach this holy place until we have removed from our hearts every carnal, worldly or profane thought!"—*Godet*.

I. On the Way to Calvary.—V. 22. *Via Dolorosa, between Pilate's palace (Castle Antonia) and Calvary. Between half-past eight and nine o'clock Friday morning.*

22. And they bring him, under the guard of Pilate's soldiers, and followed by a great crowd. **Unto the place Golgotha,** a Hebrew word, meaning **The place of a skull.** The Latin is *Calvaria*, from which comes our Calvary. The place was doubtless so named because it was a small knoll in the shape of a skull. As Dr. Broadus says, "It is common among us to call a rounded mountain-top or hill-top a head, as 'Caesar's Head' in the Blue Ridge." The exact site is unknown. The strong tendency of scholars, such as Canon Tristram, Hon. Selah Merrill, Sir William Dawson, and many others, is toward the

23. And ¹ they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

24. And when they had crucified him, they ² parted his garments, casting lots upon them, what every man should take.

And they offered him wine ²³ mingled with myrrh: but he received it not.

And they crucify him, and ²⁴ part his garments among them, casting lots upon them, what each should take.

¹ Matt. 27: 34.

² Psal. 22: 18. Luke 23: 34. John 19: 23.

knoll containing the cave called the Grotto of Jeremiah. It is "outside of the north wall of the city, but near to it, — about one hundred yards distant." It is about sixty feet high, of rounded form, covered with shallow soil and grass, in full view of the great northern road from the city. "In its form, and certain old tombs which simulate sockets of eyes, it has a remarkable resemblance, from some points of view, to a skull partly buried in the ground." — *Dawson*. It meets exactly every condition of the problem, — a hill, outside the walls, nigh into the city, close to a high road, where there were many passers-by, and surrounded by gardens and sepulchres. The route would be, for the first part of the awful march, by the line of the street still known as the Via Dolorosa, for so far popular tradition coincides with topographical evidence. — *Canon Tristram*.

Two incidents occurred on the way. SIMON OF CYRENE was compelled to aid Jesus in bearing his cross, it being too heavy for him to bear alone, exhausted and weary as he was. There were plenty of men who could have borne it, but in their rough mockery they laid hold of this African who met the procession as he was coming into the city from the country. He may have showed some sympathy, perhaps upbraiding them for their cruelty. From the way Mark speaks of him, he either was then or became afterwards a disciple. "What a name of honor has he in the gospel as the cross-bearer of the Son of God! And yet this honour put upon him is but the earnest of the glory of all who bare the cross after Jesus." — *Sadler*. "Oh, that Simon Peter, or some one of the whole race, might have volunteered! Men can volunteer now." — *Bp. Warren*. Jesus always bears the heavier end of the cross.

THE DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM also "bewailed and lamented him" on this weary walk. But Jesus bade them weep for themselves and their children, for their rejection of the Messiah meant hopeless ruin to their city. He was going to life and salvation, through death. It was joy itself compared with their prospects.

LEGENDS. Some touching legends gather around this sad journey. Ste. Veronica is said to have wiped the bloody and perspiring face of Jesus with her head cloth, on which thereupon became imprinted his features. It was also at this time, it is said, that the wandering Jew refused to let Jesus rest a moment against his porch, and hence was condemned to keep moving on, without rest, till the last day.

II. The Crucifixion Scene. — Vs. 23-28. *Nine o'clock in the morning, the third hour of the day.*

23. And they gave him to drink: just before he was nailed to the cross. Wine mingled with myrrh: *i.e.*, common sour wine, such as the soldiers used, was mingled with a powerful narcotic drug, bitter, but offered as an anæsthetic, to stupefy and dull the sense of pain. — *Lange*. This was a Jewish rather than a Roman custom. "Some of the wealthy ladies of Jerusalem charged themselves with this office of mercy." — *Lightfoot*. But he received it not. He merely tasted it (Matt. 27: 34), so as to recognize the kindness of the act, but he refused to drink enough to have any effect. Why? (1) He deliberately chose to have all his powers alert at this last hour, "so that nothing should dull his consciousness of suffering nor the clearness of his communion with God." — *Abbott*. (2) Because he would drink to the very dregs the cup of suffering which God gave him. It was an act of sublime heroism and courage.

24. And when they had crucified him. Jesus was nailed to the cross while it was lying upon the ground, then it was slowly raised with the sufferer upon it. The feet of the sufferer were only a foot or two above the ground.

The first of the seven words from the cross, "*Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*" (Luke 23: 34), was probably spoken in the height of the agony, when the cross with the victim upon it was dropped with a sudden wrench into its place in the ground. But it was even then a word for others, not for himself. *First Word From Sublime self-forgetfulness.* NOTE for whom and for what he prays. *the Cross.*

THE SUFFERING. "Gazing on the suffering Son of man, we are apt to fix our thoughts on physical suffering, hanging for hours on four burning wounds. But this was not enough to slay him. It was suffering of soul, suffering for sin, suffering

25. And ¹ it was the third hour, and they crucified him.

26. And the ² superscription of his accusation was written over, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

27. And with ³ him they crucify two thieves; the one on his right hand, and the other on his left.

28. And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And ⁴ he was numbered with the transgressors.

And it was the third hour, 25 and they crucified him.

And the superscription of 26 his accusation was written over, **THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

And with him they crucify two robbers; one on his right hand, and one on his left (a).

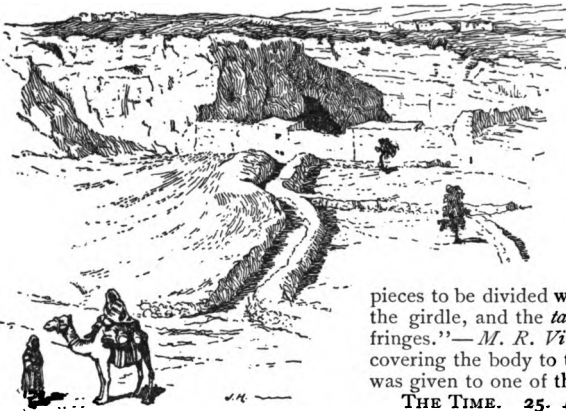
¹ Matt. 27: 35. Luke 23: 33. John 19: 18.

³ Matt. 27: 38.

⁴ Isa. 53: 12. Luke 22: 37.

(a) Many ancient authorities insert verse 28, *And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was reckoned with transgressors.* See Luke 22: 37.

² Matt. 27: 37. John 19: 19.



Grotto of Jeremiah.

for a world's sin; this ~~slaw~~ ^{slaw} him. It was not bodily suffering that broke his heart. Are our souls worth such a price?"—*Bp. Warren.*

PARTING HIS GARMENTS. They parted his garments, casting lots. The garments were the soldiers' perquisites, and while the greatest event that ever took place was going on they were busy in making what gain they could out of his cast-off clothing. "The four

pieces to be divided would be the head-gear, the sandals, the girdle, and the *tallith* or square outer garment with fringes."—*M. R. Vincent.* The inner garment or tunic covering the body to the feet, being woven in one piece, was given to one of the soldiers by lot (John 19: 24).

THE TIME. 25. And it was the third hour. Nine o'clock in the morning. The crucifixion lasted six hours, till three o'clock P. M.

THE SUPERSCRPTION. 26. The superscription in black letters on a white board, containing his accusation, the crime with which he was charged, was written over his head upon the cross. He was charged with claiming to be **THE KING OF THE JEWS**, that is, with treason. This title was written in the three languages then in common use, so that all could read. In *Greek*, for the foreigners and visitors, Greek being the learned language of all nations; in *Latin*, for the Romans; in *Hebrew*, for the Jews. The words are somewhat different in the different Gospels, probably because the title was not in the same words in each language, and different evangelists copied different inscriptions, or more probably because the real title was **THE KING OF THE JEWS**, which is common to all, and the variations are simply different ways of expressing this fact.

The Jewish rulers objected to this title (John 19: 20-22), for in their eyes it was as if Pilate had said, "Here is the Messiah, the king you have been expecting." But Pilate insisted on retaining it, because it expressed the very accusation which the Jews had brought against Jesus, of treason against Cæsar, and for which Jesus was condemned, and partly, without doubt, as a reproach to the Jews, which Pilate was quite willing to bring upon them after all the trouble they had made him.

THE KING OF THE JEWS. Thus in the chief tongues of men, the languages of religion, of culture, and of power, was proclaimed in jest what became a living truth,—that Jesus is king: the king to whom all nations and peoples should yield allegiance. And it was through the crucifixion that Jesus became king, and founded his kingdom, and drew the hearts of men to himself.

HIS ROBBER COMPANIONS. 27. And with him (one on each side) they crucify two thieves: robbers, banditti; probably some of those who were imprisoned at the same time, and for the same offence as Barabbas.

28. And the Scripture was fulfilled, recorded in Isaiah 53: 12, and reiterated by Jesus (Luke 22: 37). It expresses the humiliation of Jesus, and also a great truth. Jesus was

29. And ¹ they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah, ² thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days,

30. Save thyself, and come down from the cross.

31. Likewise also the chief priests mocking said among themselves with the scribes, He saved others; himself he cannot save.

32. Let Christ the King of Israel descend now from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they ³ that were crucified with him reviled him.

And they that passed by ²⁹ railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ha! thou that destroyest the (b) temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come 30 down from the cross.

In like manner also the 31 chief priests, mocking him among themselves with the scribes said, He saved others; (c) himself he cannot save.

Let the Christ, the King 32 of Israel, now come down from the cross, that we may see and believe. And they that were crucified with him reproached him.

¹ Psa. 22: 7.

² Matt. 27: 44.

Luke 23: 39.

(b) Or, sanctuary.

(c) Or, can he not save himself?

³ Mark 14: 58. John 2: 19.

numbered with the transgressors, the whole human race, that he might deliver them from their transgressions.

III. **The Friendly Watchers.**—John 19: 25. Friends of Jesus, especially the women who had often ministered to his wants, were not wanting among the rough crowd around the cross. The three Marys were there,—Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary, the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene, and other women (Matt. 27: 55, 56), watching afar off. John, at least, of the disciples was near by (John 19: 26). Let us admire the faithfulness and love of these friends of Jesus.

IV. **The Mocking Crowds.**—Vs. 29-32. *From nine o'clock till noon. By the soldiers, the priests, the robbers, and the crowd.* 29. **They that passed by.** The people going in and out of the city, on the thoroughfare near the place of crucifixion.—*Clarke.* **Railed on him, wagging their heads:** using both voice and gesture to express their mockery. All the raileries described are those which express the contrast between Jesus' present condition and the title over him and his own claims. The contrast excited the mirth of the crowd. **Ah, thou that destroyest the temple, etc.:** the charge which was falsely brought against Jesus in the trial, being a perversion of his words. But it is remarkable that at this very hour the words he *really* spoke were in the process of being fulfilled.

Mockeries by the Cross.

30. **Come down from the cross.** How could you do so great a thing as to destroy and rebuild the temple in three days, if you cannot do the little thing of saving yourself from the cross? At any moment he could have done it, had he so chosen.

31. **He saved others; himself he cannot save:** implying that his saving others, his saving men from sickness, his raising them from the dead, his promises of forgiveness and eternal life were a cheat, a false claim. But "if he had saved himself by coming down from the cross, he could not have saved others."—*President Woolsey.*

32. **Let Christ the King of Israel, etc.** If Jesus were the Messiah, the great King who should overthrow the Romans, and all the enemies of the Jews, surely he could deliver himself from the Roman cross. Their argument seems invincible, till we see that he could not be the Christ and Saviour *unless* he had been crucified. **That we may see and believe.** But they would not have believed, but would have found some other excuse for not believing; for he did something more wonderful than they now asked: he rose from the grave, and yet they did not believe. "The words they spoke could not afflict him. But what horror to the pure soul to behold these yawning abysses of malignity, these gulfs of pitiless hate."—*Chadwick.* **And they that were crucified with him reviled him:** either both did at first, and then one changed; or the expression is simply a general one. "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow" (Lam. 1: 12).

V. **The Robber's Conversion.**—Luke 23: 39-43. *Toward noon.* While the crowds were mocking there was a most wonderful event taking place among the victims. Jesus was actually doing some of the work he came from heaven to do. One of the robbers, while hanging on the cross, was converted and forgiven, and began even then that new life which could be developed and nurtured in paradise. He was probably not so much a hard-hearted man as a Jewish fanatic, who in his way had been trying to deliver the Jews from

Second Word from the Cross.

33. And ¹ when the sixth hour was come, there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour.

34. And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying,² Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?

35. And some of them that stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elias.

And when the sixth hour ³³ was come, there was darkness over the whole (*d*) land until the ninth hour

And at the ninth hour ³⁴ Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, (*e*) why hast thou forsaken me?

And some of them that ³⁵ stood by, when they heard *it*, said, Behold, he calleth Elijah.

¹ Matt. 27: 45. Luke 23: 44. ² Psa. 22: 1. Matt. 27: 46. (*d*) Or, earth. (*e*) Or, why didst thou forsake me?

the Roman domination. "The divine record contains *but one* such example, but it contains *one*: but one, to save us from presumption; one, to save us from despair." — *Professor Kendrick*. A dying Saviour had on one side of him an enemy and unbeliever, and on the other side a friend and believer. Thus it is to-day in every part of the globe where Christ is preached. — *Nehemiah Adams*. "Adam, by the tree, fell; thou, by the tree art brought into Paradise." "I have found a sheep, a lost one, but I lay it on my shoulders, for he believes." — *Cyril of Jerusalem*, in a sermon "*preached within a stone's throw of the place*" where this occurred.

NOTE THE EVIDENCES OF HIS CONVERSION. (1) He believed under very difficult circumstances, against the popular feeling. (2) He defended Christ from false charges. (3) He was concerned for his fellow-sufferer. (4) He confessed his sin. (5) He prayed for mercy. (6) His faith was large and strong. *Jesus, remember me when thou comest in thy kingdom*. "Rare faith! Through the tears of his penitence, as through lenses of light, he sees the new Dawn to which this fearful night will give birth, the kingdom which is sure to come, and which, coming, will abide, and he salutes the dying One, as Christ, the King!" — *Burton*.

VI. Jesus Lovingly Commits His Mother to the Care of John. — *Toward noon*. (John 19: 25-27.) Seeing his mother and the beloved disciple near the cross, Jesus, ever thoughtful of others even in his greatest agony, asks the disciple to care for Mary as he would for his own mother. Hence—

Third Word from the Cross.

VII. Three Hours' Darkness over All the Land. — *From twelve to three o'clock*. — V. 33. (Matt. 27: 45; Luke 23: 44, 45.)

"Three hours of raging human passion, endured with Godlike patience, were succeeded by three hours of darkness, hushing mortal hatred into silence, and perhaps contributing to the penitence of the reviler at his side. It was a supernatural gloom, since an eclipse of the sun was impossible during the full moon of Passover." — *Chadwick*. This darkness was typical of the powers of darkness which seemed to be prevailing; of the great sufferings of the atonement for sin, of the darkness brooding over Jesus' heart; of the dark hour of sin and depravity that could crucify God's beloved Son; of the darkness of sin over all the earth which was to be dispelled by the cross of Jesus and by his resurrection from the dead.

"Well might the sun in darkness hide
And shut his glories in."

VIII. The Closing Scenes. — Vs. 34-37. *Three o'clock in the afternoon*. 34. **At the ninth hour**. Three o'clock, the hour of the evening sacrifice, when daily in the temple the lamb was slain, and the people offered prayers. **Jesus cried with a loud voice**. Literally, *a great voice*. **Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?** These words are here given in the Aramaic, or Syro-Chaldaic, a language allied to the Hebrew, and used by Christ and the people in their ordinary intercourse. It is a translation of the Hebrew (given in Matthew) of Psalms 22: 1. **My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?** Jesus, of course, was not really forsaken; but it seemed so to him for the time. The emphasis is on *thou*. It might be expected of others, — but *thou*! How can I endure that? "The cry reveals unfathomable depths. Some help toward an understanding of this cry may be derived from that phase of Christian experience in which, while the intellect still holds fast to its belief in God, the heart *feels* his presence no more, and the soul is in darkness in spite of its faith in God. (Compare Matt. 11: 1-6; Ex. 17: 4; 1 Kings 19: 10; Psa. 10: 1; 12: 1, 2)." — *Abbott*.

Fourth Word from the Cross.

35. **Behold, he calleth Elias.** Greek for Elijah. "Eloi" closely resembles "Elijah"

36. And one ¹ ran and filled a sponge full of vinegar, and put *it* on a reed, and gave ² him to drink, saying, Let alone; let us see whether Elias will come to take him down.

37. ³ And Jesus cried with a loud voice, and gave up the ghost.

And one ran, and filling a sponge full of vinegar, put it on a reed, and gave him to drink, saying, Let be; let us see whether Elijah cometh to take him down.

And Jesus uttered a loud ³⁷ voice, and gave up the ghost.

¹ Matt. 27: 48. John 19: 29.

² Psa. 69: 21.

³ Matt. 27: 50.

Luke 23: 46. John 19: 30.

in the original. Perhaps a misunderstanding, but quite as likely an intended mockery, as if he were calling upon the expected forerunner of the Messiah for help. The fifth word from the cross, "I thirst," was probably spoken at this time. **Fifth Word from the Cross.**

36. And one ran (in answer to Christ's cry) and filled a sponge full of vinegar. It seems to be certain from Luke 23: 36 that the "vinegar" was thin, sour wine, the ordinary drink of the soldiers. This may have been brought by them for their own use during the long watch. — *Westcott*. Saying, Let alone. The crowd say (Matt.), Let (him) alone; do not give him drink, for he expects Elijah to help him. The one who gave him drink says (Mark), Let (me) alone; I will give him drink, and see if Elijah will come. Immediately after this, Jesus cried, *It is finished* (John 19: 30). What was finished? His life on earth, his life's work, the cup of suffering, the atonement for the sins of the world, the old era and dispensation, the prophecies of scripture. **Sixth Word from the Cross.**

37. And Jesus cried with a loud voice, as if it were a shout of triumph, saying, *Father*, into thy hands I commend my spirit (Luke 23: 46). "Now the darkness is gone; he has recovered his light, his Father's face. It is the first effect of the completion of redemption, the glorious prelude of the resurrection." — *Godet*. And gave up the ghost. Ghost is old English for "spirit." His soul. Note how all of the evangelists speak of Christ's death as a departure, a separation of soul and body, and that a voluntary one. **Seventh Word from the Cross.**

PHYSICAL CAUSE OF CHRIST'S DEATH. The physical cause of his death has been thought by many to have been rupture of the heart. "He died literally of a broken heart."

IX. **Accompanying Signs.** — *Just after three o'clock* (Matt. 27: 51-54; Mark 15: 38, 39; Luke 23: 45, 47, 48). (1) As Jesus expired, the great veil of the temple that hung between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies was rent in twain. The veils before the Most Holy Place were forty cubits (sixty feet) long, and twenty (thirty feet) wide, of the thickness of the palm of the hand, and wrought in seventy-two squares, which were joined together; and these veils were so heavy that, in the exaggerated language of the time, it needed three hundred priests to manipulate each. — *Edersheim*. The rending of the veil typified that the veil that shut out the vision of holiness from the hearts of the people had been taken away (2 Cor. 3: 14-16), and the way into the Holy Place, the state of holiness, and the place of holiness, was now opened. (2) At the same time there was an earthquake of such power as to rend the rocks, and open the tombs, showing how nature, the handiwork of the Son of God, sympathized with the mighty struggle that was going on. Certain graves were opened, and, after the resurrection of Christ, many bodies of saints that slept came forth, as if to accompany the victorious Christ, and prefigure the resurrection of the dead, and the moral resurrection of the world. (3) All these things greatly affected the people, and even the Roman centurion who had charge of the crucifixion, and doubtless prepared men to see that this was no common death, and hence to believe in his resurrection.

Veil of Temple Rent.

The Earthquake.

X. **The Burial.** *Between four and six o'clock, in a garden near Calvary.* Matthew 27: 57-61; Mark 15: 42-47; Luke 23: 50-56; John 19: 31-42. Soon after his death the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross by Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, was wrapped in linen with spices, and placed in a new tomb, in a garden close by Calvary.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

As to the *location of Calvary*, see two pamphlets, Dr. Selah Merrill's *Site of Calvary* (Andover) and Fisher Howe's *True Site of Calvary* (Randolph); also Dawson's *Egypt and Syria; Land and Book*, new ed., Vol. II., pp. 485, 533; Conder's *Handbook of the*

Bible. Trench's *Studies in the Gospels* gives an excellent explanation of the story of the crucifixion. Farrar's, and Geikie's *Life of Christ* contain elaborate descriptions of the crucifixion.

On the effect of the death of Christ, see Merrill's *The Reasonable Christ*, "Calvary"; Joseph Cook's *Monday Lectures*, "Orthodoxy"; Professor Park's *Atonement*, especially the article by Caleb Burge; *Sermons*, by Phillips Brooks, Vol. I., p. 193; Bishop Simpson, p. 241; F. W. Robertson, series 5. For illustration, see James T. Field's *Poems*, "The Cross Guideboard in the Alps."

LESSONS FROM THE CROSS.

1. The cross is a shame or a glory, according to the spirit and motives with which we bear it.
2. The deed transforms the place, as Calvary, the place of execution, has become the center of the world's history and the world's salvation.
3. The cost of salvation smites all indifference to religion. If Christ was willing to die that we might be saved, what ought not we to do?
4. Those that watch Christ may find in him a King, a Redeemer, an Example, or, if they themselves are bad, only a subject for mockery and insult. Which company shall we join?

But whether on the scaffold
Or in the battle's van,

The fittest place for man to die
Is where he dies for man.

— Michael J. Barry.

5. The cross expresses God's feelings toward sin, his readiness to forgive sin, the terrible evil and danger of sin that costs such a sacrifice for deliverance from it. No one would suffer so much to save others from a slight evil but little danger.

6. The cross declares in "letters that can be read from the stars" God's love to man. Christ was God himself, and expressed God's own heart. God did not put punishment upon an innocent person. The atonement on the cross was a voluntary sacrifice. When the Greeks were besieging Troy, and met with ill success, the priest Calchas told them that the only way to appease the offended goddess, and gain the victory, was to sacrifice to Diana, Iphigenia, the beautiful daughter of King Agamemnon. And these brave men of old are said to have taken her by strategy and force, and brought this innocent girl to the altar to slay her in their stead. This sacrifice (though she was rescued) was unworthy of them, was mean and unjust beyond words to express. But whenever any persons have offered themselves, as Horatius and his comrades at the bridge of Rome, or the nobles of Calais to Edward the Sixth, the sacrifice has been the height of heroism. The sacrifice expressed the highest love possible.

7. The cross furnishes every possible motive for turning from sin, touching the heart with love, showing our danger, giving us hope of forgiveness and life, teaching the law of duty, which prefers death to failure or neglect. It shows the value of our souls, the value of salvation, and the worth of eternal life in heaven.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Here, as in the last two lessons, a *Harmony* is of great value.

TEACH the whole story of the crucifixion. *Drill* the scholars on the leading facts.

The following diagram, based on one by Mrs. E. L. Miller, of Peru, Ind., in the *Sunday-School Times*, may help impress the facts. Begin at VI., six o'clock, or first hour, and move on to the left. The numbers 1, 2, etc., designate the seven words from the cross.

Truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne.
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

* * * * *

Though the cause of evil prosper, yet 'tis Truth alone is strong.
And, albeit she wander outcast now, I see around her throng
Troops of beautiful, tall angels, to enshroud her from all wrong.

— Lowell.

Illustrations. (1) Bunker Hill Monument commemorates a defeat, which for a long time was looked upon with chagrin and disappointment; and yet that defeat was really the birth-throe of our country, and had more glorious results and more wide-reaching influence than most victories. (2) So the famous Thermopylae was a defeat, but has thrilled the

ages because it was a moral victory. (3) A noble deed transfigures the place where it is performed, as Calvary, the place of execution, has become the center of the world's history and the world's salvation.

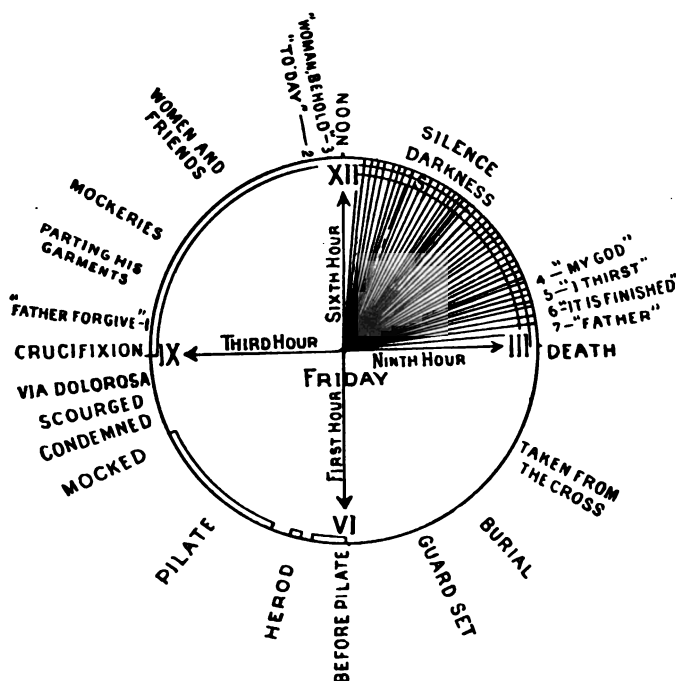


Illustration. While the darkness at the crucifixion was doubtless miraculous, the effects may well be illustrated by other cases that bear some resemblance to it. "M. Liais, a well-known naturalist, relates that on the 11th of April, 1860, in the province of Pernambuco, while the sky was perfectly clear, the sun became dark about midday to such a degree that for some seconds it was possible to look at it. The solar disc appeared surrounded with a ring having the colors of the rainbow, and quite near it there was seen a bright star, which must have been Venus. The phenomenon lasted for some minutes. M. Liais attributes it to cosmical nebulae floating in space beyond our atmosphere. A similar phenomenon must have occurred in the years 1106, 1208, 1547, and 1706" (*Revue Germanique*, 1860)." — F. Godet.

Illustration. I remember well the dark day of Sept. 6, 1881, which extended over a large part of New England; and, although the darkness was only partial, it was one of the most weird and strange scenes I ever witnessed. One of the greatest of modern astronomers, speaking of a total eclipse, says, "The phenomenon, in fact, is one of the most terrible that man can witness, and no degree of partial eclipses gives any idea of its horrors."

Illustration. As all the stars of heaven are said to be moving around the star Alcyone in the Pleiades, so all the Bible and all history move around the cross of Christ as their center. "The cross of Jesus must ever remain the one bright center of all our hopes and all our songs. Nay, the cross of Jesus will be 'in the midst' of heaven itself, the center towards which the circles of redeemed saints will bow, and round which the ceaseless 'Alleluia' will roll; for what is 'the Lamb in the midst of the throne' (Rev. 7: 17) but the cross transfigured, and the Lamb eternally enthroned?" — Burton.

Illustration. The familiar story of Zeleucus, King of the Locri, best told and explained in the discourse of Caleb Burge, in Professor Park's book on the atonement, is the best exposition I have ever seen of the governmental theory of the atonement.

LESSON IX.—JUNE 2.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.—MARK 16: 1-8.

Golden Text.—*The Lord is risen indeed.*—LUKE 24: 34.

THE SECTION includes the story of the resurrection through the first three appearances of Jesus. Matthew 28: 1-15; Mark 16: 1-11; Luke 24: 1-12; John 20: 1-18.

TIME.—Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30. The third day after the crucifixion.

PLACE.—Jerusalem and vicinity, more especially near Calvary.

MEASURES TAKEN to make sure that Jesus was really dead. (1) The soldier's spear piercing his side. (2) The tomb was a new one, so that there could be no doubt as to the identity of the body. (3) The Roman guard, and the sealed sepulchre, so that there could be no secret taking away of the body. The actual death of Christ is a necessary basis for the reality of the resurrection.

OUR LORD'S APPEARANCES AFTER HIS RESURRECTION.

ORDER.	TIME.	TO WHOM.	WHERE.	RECORD.
1	Sunday, April 9. Early in the morning	To Mary Magdalene	Near the sepulchre at Jerusalem	Mark 16: 9; John 20: 11-18
2	Sunday morning	To the women returning from the sepulchre	Near Jerusalem	Matt. 28: 9, 10
3	Sunday	To Simon Peter alone	Near Jerusalem	Luke 24: 34
4	Sunday afternoon	To two disciples going to Emmaus	Between Jerusalem and Emmaus, and at Emmaus	Luke 24: 13-31
5	Sunday evening	To the apostles, excepting Thomas	Jerusalem	John 20: 19-25
6	Sunday evening, April 16	To the apostles, Thomas being present	Jerusalem	John 20: 26-29
7	Last of April or first of May	To seven disciples fishing	Sea of Galilee	John 21: 1-13
8	Last of April or first of May	To the eleven disciples on a mountain	Galilee	Matt. 28: 16-20
9	Last of April or first of May	To above five hundred brethren at once	Galilee	1 Cor. 15: 6
10	May	To James only	Jerusalem, probably	1 Cor. 15: 7
11	Thursday, May 18	To all the apostles, at his ascension	Mount of Olives, near Bethany	Luke 24: 50, 51; Acts 1: 6-12

EXPLANATORY.

THE STORY OF EASTER MORNING.

I. Jesus Rises from the Dead.—*Very early Sunday morning, April 9.* (Matt. 28: 2-4.)

THE THREE DAYS IN THE TOMB. Jesus had lain in the grave a part of each three days, — Friday afternoon, Saturday all day, and part of Sunday, beginning at sunset Saturday night. He had repeatedly foretold that he should rise on the third day, or after three days. It was the custom of the Jews to count the *The Three Days*. parts of each day as a whole day. We see it illustrated in the chronology of the kings, by the way they counted the years of a reign. Thus a reign extending from December, 1893, through 1894 into January, 1895, would be counted as three years, although only thirteen or fourteen months. It is so in the Old Testament, in the Talmud, in Josephus, and in the Assyrian tablets. Days were counted in the same way.

1. And ¹ when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, had ² bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

And when the sabbath was ¹ past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the *mother* of James, and Salome, bought spices, that they might come and anoint him.

¹ Matt. 28: 1. Luke 24: 1. John 20: 1.

² Luke 23: 56.

Nothing is known of the method or manner of the resurrection.

"The strife is o'er, the battle done;
The victory of life is won;
The song of triumph has begun."

"'Tis the spring of souls to-day;
Christ hath burst his prison,
And from three days' sleep in death,
As the sun, hath risen."

II. The Accompanying Signs. The resurrection was accompanied by a great earthquake; and an angel, whose countenance was like lightning, and whose raiment was white as snow, came and rolled away the stone from the sepulchre; not to allow Jesus to come forth, of course, but for the sake of those who were coming to view the sepulchre, and to show that the resurrection was an act of divine power.

III. The Guard Affrighted. The guard of Roman soldiers was greatly frightened and became as dead men. Doubtless they soon escaped from the scene, to report to the Jewish rulers; for they do not seem to have been near the tomb when the friends of Jesus came.

IV. The Women Come to the Tomb *about dawn; from various parts of the city.*
Vs. 1-4.

NOTE. In the stories of the different evangelists there are a number of variations and sometimes almost slight contradictions. But all can be put together in one connected story, as we do in this account. However, we must remember that this is always true of independent histories of an event seen by different observers from different standpoints, and is a proof of the reliability of the story. If all had exactly agreed, it would be proof of collusion. The same event presents a different aspect to each observer. Even if there were contradictions, which there are not, they would not discredit the fact. Thus there was a real battle of Waterloo, although, as Chadwick says, "When the generals of Henry the Fourth strove to tell him what passed after he was wounded at Aumale, no two of them agreed in the course of events which gave them victory. Two armies beheld the battle of Waterloo, but who can tell when it began? At ten o'clock, said the Duke of Wellington. At half past eleven, said General Alava, who rode beside him. At twelve, according to Napoleon and Drouet; and at one, according to Ney." Probably it began at different times in different parts.

Variations in the Narrative.

Waterloo.

1. **And when the sabbath was past:** *i.e.*, after sunset of Saturday, their sabbath. **Mary Magdalene**, Mary of Magdala, out of whom Jesus had cast seven demons, as recorded in Luke 8: 2. No wonder she loved the Saviour, and went earliest to his tomb. Jesus had relieved her of some specially severe form of demoniacal possession. She must not be confused with another woman who was redeemed from an impure life. **Mary the mother of James:** "the less," or "the younger" son of Alphaeus, and one of the apostles. **Salome:** wife of Zebedee and mother of James and John. Luke (24: 10) adds, *Joanna* (wife of Chuza, Herod's steward) *and others with them*, the company of women from Galilee who ministered to Jesus (Matt. 27: 55). Note the devotion of these women who went to the sepulchre before even the best of the apostles.

Women at the Tomb.

Not she with traitorous kiss her Master stung;
Not she denied him with unfaithful tongue;
She when apostles fled could danger brave,
Last at his cross and earliest at his grave.

— Barrett.

Had bought: not pluperfect, but merely *bought*, as in R. V., partly on Friday afternoon, before sunset (Luke 23: 55, 56), and partly, perhaps, by others of the company on Saturday, after sunset, when the Jewish Sabbath was past. The Jewish bazaars were open in the evening following the Sabbath. The spices were bought then, so that they could start very early the next morning. **Sweet spices,** R. V., spices. Luke says spices and ointments (23: 56). The spices brought by Nicodemus were aloes and myrrh (John 19: 39). **That they might come and anoint him.** Embalm him; or apply these spices to his body to

2. And ¹ very early in the morning, the first *day* of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

3. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?

4. And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.

And very early on the day of the week, they to the tomb when the sun risen.

And they were s among themselves, Who roll us away the stone the door of the tomb? looking up, they see the stone is rolled back: was exceeding great.

¹ Luke 24: 1. John 20: 1.

keep it from putrefaction. This is proof that they did not suppose he would rise. And the fact that they did not *expect* he would rise gives more strength to the evidence of his resurrection. — *Jacobus*. "And so the very spices the women prepare for the anointing are a silent but a fragrant testimony to the reality of the resurrection." — *Burton*.

2. And very early in the morning, while it was yet dark (John). This refers to the time of their starting, while at the rising of the sun refers to their arrival at the tomb. They probably started from their homes in different parts of the city at different hours. **Came unto the sepulchre.** Canon Tristram says that at the present time there is a rock-hewn sepulchre in a garden near the probable site of Calvary which answers perfectly to the description of Jesus' tomb.

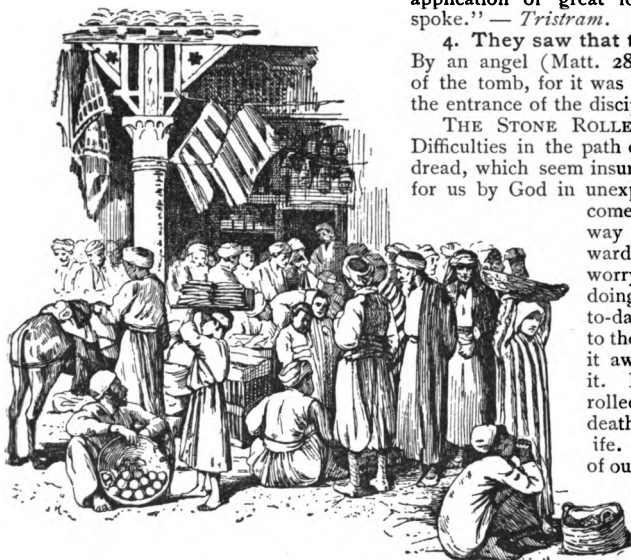
3. And they said (were saying) among themselves. Unaware of the deputation of the Jewish rulers, which had gone to Pilate, and secured the sealing of the stone at the setting of the watch over the tomb (Matt. 27: 62-66), their only anxiety was, **Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre?** — *Cambridge Bible*. The tomb was cut in the side of a rock, like a cave, large enough for several persons to enter. The entrance was protected by a large stone. **Stone Door of the Tomb.**

In some tombs near the probable site of Calvary "there is a deep groove, about three feet wide, cut out of the rock, by the side of the doorway, under which the rock is hollowed to the same width for two or three feet; the groove is a huge circular stone, of a diameter greater than the height of the door, a huge millstone. To close the tomb, this stone was worked by hand-spokes into the groove under the doorway, which it completely filled; and it could only be moved back by the application of great force through lever or spoke." — *Tristram*.

4. They saw that the stone was rolled away. By an angel (Matt. 28: 2). Not to let Jesus enter the tomb, for it was no hindrance to him, but to let the entrance of the disciples.

THE STONE ROLLED AWAY FROM THE TOMB. Difficulties in the path of duty, difficulties which seem insurmountable, are often removed for us by God in unexpected ways, but not to our credit.

There is only one way to do, — to go straight forward in simple obedience, without worrying about difficulties. We are to do the work that is given us to-day; and then when we come to the obstacle God will either remove it away, or show us a path around it. For instance, (1) the stone was rolled away from the tomb at the death by the resurrection and new life. (2) The obstacles in the path of our salvation, — our hard hearts, our sins, the opposition of our friends, the reluctance to do hard duties, — are removed from those who go forward in faith. (3) Doctrinal difficulties



Bazaar towards Evening.

5. And ¹ entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted.

6. And ² he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him.

7. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as ³ he said unto you.

And entering into the tomb, 5 they saw a young man sitting on the right side, arrayed in a white robe; and they were amazed.

And he saith unto them, Be 6 not amazed: ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, which hath been crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold, the place where they laid him!

But go, tell his disciples 7 and Peter, He goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you.

¹ Luke 24: 3. John 20: 11, 12.

² Matt. 28: 5, 6, 7.

³ Matt. 26: 32.

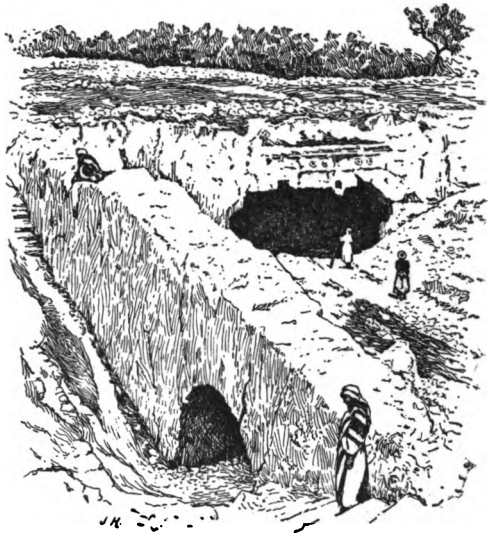
removed by doing each duty as it comes to us. Our path is often like a winding way through a forest and among the hills. We can see but a little distance, and cannot know beforehand where the path leads, but when we come to the end of what we can see, a further path opens up to us. (4) The same is true of the progress of Christianity, of real reforms, of business, of every line of duty.

V. **Mary Magdalene Arrives.**—John 20: 1-3. Mary Magdalene, "whose eyes were homes of silent prayer," seems to have reached the tomb first, and, finding it empty, hastens away to tell Peter that Jesus is not in the sepulchre, thinking that some one had stolen the body.

With myrrh and with aloes
We balm'd and we bathed him,
Loyally, lovingly,
Tenderly swathed him:

With cerecloth and band
For the grave we arrayed him;
But, oh, he is gone
From the place where we laid him.

— *Goethe's Faust.*



Tomb of the Kings.

VI. **The Other Women Enter the Sepulchre.**—Vs. 5-7. Matthew 28: 5-8;

Luke 24: 4-8. 5. They saw a young man: an angel in this form (Matt. 28: 2-5); the one who rolled the stone away and sat upon it. Luke speaks of two angels. It strikes one as very remarkable that this superhuman being should be described as a "young man." Immortal youth, with all of buoyant energy and fresh power which that attribute suggests, belongs to those beings whom scripture faintly shows as our elder brethren. No waste decays their strength, no change robs them of forces which have ceased to increase. Age cannot wither them. As one of our modern mystics has said, hiding imaginative spiritualism under a crust of hard, dry matter-of-fact, "In heaven the oldest angels are the youngest."—*Maclaren*. Sitting on the right side: as they entered. Clothed in a long white garment. Matthew says it was white as snow, and his countenance was like lightning. The white raiment was a symbol of purity and of fellowship with God (Rev. 3: 4, 5, 18; 4: 4; 6: 11; 7: 9-13). And they were affrighted, R. V., better, *amazed*; it was wonder rather than fright.—*M. R. Vincent*.

The Angels in the Tomb.

6. Be not affrighted: amazed at such a sight instead of the dead body of Jesus. He is risen; he is not here: behold the place. The angel shows them the grave-clothes, and the face-cloth, or kerchief, folded by itself to show them that he is risen, as he had foretold them, and then he declares that they should soon see him again.

7. Tell his disciples and Peter. Observe that, as Christ's first appearance is to Mary Magdalene (John 20: 18), out of whom he had cast seven devils, so his special message

8. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre; for they trembled and were amazed: neither ¹ said they any thing to any man; for they were afraid.

And they went out, and fled from the tomb; for trembling and astonishment had come upon them; and they said nothing to any one; for they were afraid.

¹ Matt. 28: 8. Luke 24: 9.

is to Peter, who had denied him. — *Abbott*. A touching commentary on our Saviour's saying that he came to save sinners. Tell Peter, for it will be news more welcome to him than to any of them; for he is in sorrow for sin, and he will be afraid lest the joy of this good news do not belong to him. — *Matthew Henry*. That he goeth before you into Galilee. The appearances in Galilee were not the first appearances of Jesus; but they are mentioned here because "Galilee was appointed to be the scene of his manifestation of himself to the largest assembly of witnesses, and of his most decisive instructions. (See Matt. 28: 16, with 1 Cor. 15: 6)." — *W. N. Clarke*. As he said unto you: Matthew 26: 32.

VII. **The Women Return to Tell the News.** — V. 8. Luke 24: 9-11; Matthew 28: 8. 8. And they went out quickly. The news was too good to keep; and they were anxious to solve the mystery and consult with the apostles. They trembled and were amazed: the word carries the sense of *bewilderment*. Matthew adds that they had great joy as well as astonishment and fear. "Fear at what they had seen, joy at what they had heard; and both mingled because the latter seemed too good to be true." — *Schaff*. Neither said they any thing to any: they did not stop to tell the news to any one while on the way to the apostles.

IX. **Peter and John Arrive at the Tomb.** — John 20: 3-10. Just after the women had left, still early in the morning. John, the younger, ran the faster, and reached the tomb first; but Peter, the more daring and confident, was the first to enter. They looked awhile, were convinced of the reality of resurrection, and returned home.

X. **First Appearance of Jesus, — To Mary Magdalene.** — Mark 16: 9-11; John 20: 11-18. Early in the morning. After notifying Peter and John, Mary returned to the sepulchre, following them less swiftly, and arriving soon after they had gone away. She saw the two angels in white, and, turning back, saw Jesus himself, and again returned to tell the disciples the joyful news.

XI. **Second Appearance, — To the Other Women.** — Matt. 28: 9, 10. Still early Sunday morning. The visit of Peter and John and the appearance to Mary took but a brief time, during which the other women were slowly returning to the city. On their way Jesus met them, and saluted them with "All hail," "Rejoice," the usual form of salutation. They worshipped him, and carried his message to the apostles.

XII. **The Third Appearance, — To Simon Peter.** — Luke 24: 34. This must have been a great comfort to him, opening the door of hope, a heavenly benediction of peace over a soul burdened with remorse on account of his denials.

There were no other appearances till Sunday afternoon, as described in our next lesson.

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Discussions of immortality from various standpoints; Plato's *Phædo*; Cicero's *De Senectute*; Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Hamlet's soliloquy in the castle of Elsinore; and *Measure for Measure*, Claudio's address to his sister Isabella; Stewart and Tait's *Unseen Universe*; Wordsworth's *Poems*, "Intimations"; Longfellow's *Poems*, "Resignation."

PHOTOGRAPHS of celebrated paintings of the risen Christ, by Bartolommeo, Rembrandt, Perugino, and Angelico. The appearance to Mary Magdalene, by Titian, Correggio, Rembrandt.

SUMMARY OF PROOFS OF THE RESURRECTION.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the best attested fact of history. — *Lyman Abbott*.

1. The resurrection is attested by a large number of most competent witnesses, and under circumstances which exclude deception of every kind. They had every opportunity of knowing the truth. The conviction was wrought in direct opposition to their previous beliefs and worldly interests. It cost them their lives to believe it. They based their hopes and preaching upon it, and stood by it to the death.

2. By their declaration of the fact they induced thousands of the very enemies of Christ to believe in it, and that close to the time and near the very spot on which it occurred. The early church universally believed in it; and it is incredible that a myth, a false story, should have so grown up without substantial foundation.

3. Only the fact of the resurrection can account for the marvellous change in the spirit and character of the apostles. The resurrection completely transformed them; inspired them with a new conception of Christ's kingdom as for all people, with a new courage to suffer for the sake of their risen Lord and his kingdom, and with a new purpose to preach Christ and him crucified everywhere as a spiritual redemption for sin (Acts 2: 39; 5: 41; 10: 43). Neither fraud nor fiction is competent to account for the moral contrast.

4. "A singular and significant testimony to the truth of the resurrection is afforded by the change in the Sabbath day. It was changed, not by any express command in the New Testament, but by the almost universal consent of the church, which could not endure to observe as a day of joy and gladness that on which Christ lay in the tomb, nor forbear to mark as a weekly festival that on which he arose." — *Abbott*.

5. The very existence of the Christian church is a proof of the resurrection of Jesus. "Faith in mere visions or phantoms may produce phantoms, but not such a phenomenon as the Christian church, the greatest fact and the mightiest institution in the history of the world." — *President Woolsey*.

6. The resurrection fits into the life of Christ, the Saviour, as an essential part. His life and the whole plan of salvation would be incomplete without it.

7. The works Christ has been doing ever since in the world are a proof that he who does them is a risen, living Saviour, — the conversion of Paul, the victory over the Roman Empire, the ever-increasing progress of Christianity, the marvellous works of conversion and revival, the fruits of the Spirit.

LESSONS FROM THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

1. The resurrection of Jesus is the crowning proof that he is the Son of God. If he could not conquer death, and come back from heaven, he could not prove that at the first he came from heaven.

2. It is the proof of immortal life beyond the grave; that death does not end all, but the soul lives after the body dies.

3. It proves that we have a living Saviour, sitting on the right hand of God.

4. It proves that our Saviour, who could conquer death, has power over all our enemies.

5. It is the assurance of our own resurrection, with spiritual bodies like his glorious body; all sickness, weakness, and pain gone, and new life, new powers, new joys, beyond our highest conception.

6. Hence it gives assurance of the recognition of our loved ones beyond the grave.

7. It takes away the darkness from the tomb, and makes it the gate of life.

8. It gives largeness and broadness to life, everything we are and do having an influence and a meaning beyond the grave.

9. It teaches the moral resurrection, that, being dead to sin, we should be alive unto God.

SOME PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. We have in the disciples an excellent example of keeping the Sabbath.

2. How often we say, as we approach a difficult duty, "Who will roll away the stone?" only to find, if we go straight on, that God in his own way has removed the obstacles. Often exemplified in the history of modern missions.

3. "We ought to come early always in our service of love for Christ. We ought to come in the morning of life, while youth's purity and freshness are unsullied. We ought to

come in the morning of each day, so that not one golden moment of time may be lost. We ought to come always eagerly and promptly to every duty of love. Then we must remember that we come not now to a grave, seeking a dead Christ whose cold body we may anoint, but to a living Christ who is the glorious King of kings."—*J. R. Miller*.

4. The women, instead of embalming their Lord, carried their spices back unused. Not unused, however, for in the spices and ointments the Living One did not need, their own names were embalmed, a fragrant memory.

5. Mark reminds his readers that this was the woman out of whom the Lord had cast seven devils, meaning apparently to suggest that those who have most need of encouragement from him are surest to get it.

6. Those who love Christ most diligently and perseveringly are those who receive most privileges from Christ's hand.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Illustration. It is said that in the Siberian mines there are those who were born there, and never have seen the light of the upper world. With their dim lamps and narrow vision, and cold, damp air, and absence of all plant life, they can have no conception of the glory of a June day, of the enchanting scenery, of fields, of flowers, of forests fringing the hills. All they can know is from the reports of those who have been in the upper world. We are farther away from the heavenly life than a Siberian mine from a summer day. But we can believe him who has been above. We can be sure from his testimony, and his resurrection that we are not

"Like ships that sailed from sunny isles,
But never came to shore."

Illustrations. The life beyond death has been compared to the butterfly life, as developing new powers and beauties beyond that of the old caterpillar life. Paul's comparison is more perfect, and we can trust it, for it is given by inspiration of God. This life is like the seed; that, like the plant that grows from the seed. Who would dream that all the strength and beauty of an oak was enclosed in the acorn? Who would imagine that the radiance and fragrance of the rose could develop from the seed of the rose, or the brilliance of a tulip from a bulb? Our powers and enjoyments will not in that world be of the same kind as here so far as pertains to our bodies; but they will be as much greater and more perfect as the carnation is beyond the black seed, or the spiritual body beyond this physical body.

Illustration. The unbeliever who put upon his tomb, "I have no hope of heaven and no fear of hell," had an epitaph fit for a brute beast, but sad, alas, for a man. Compare Dwight L. Moody's sermon on the death of his brother with R. Ingersoll's beautiful but hopeless words about his brother.

Illustration. The old city of Breslau in Silesia has one of the finest Sunday-school rooms in the world. The Emperor William gave it a bell made from French cannon which were captured during a recent war.

A kingly deed, O Kaiser!
No alchemist of old
E'er turned the baser metal
To fairer, purer gold

Than from the roar of brazen cannon
To the chime of Sabbath bell.
—*M. E. Thalheimer*.

Illustration. When a boy I lived near a paper-mill, and had frequent opportunities of seeing the manufacture of paper from rags. Often have I seen the rag-dealers bringing large bags of rags of all kinds to the mill. "Save your shreds," he used to say; "don't waste your dirty rags — put them into the rag-bag, *Rags into Paper*, and I will give you a good price for them. You call them useless; I tell you they are not." Nor are they. Send them to the mill; there they will pick or sort them, wash them, grind them, mash them, and form them, as Goethold says, into a fabric beautiful enough to venture into the presence of monarchs and princes. "This reminds me of the resurrection of my mortal body."

Illustration. In the drama of *Alcectis*, by Euripides, there is a vivid picture of Hercules, "half god, half man, encountering Thanatos (Death) in personal conflict, and overcoming him at the tomb, and then restoring to life and light the pure, devoted, self-sacrificing Alcectis."

Illustration. "Could you ask the rose of its dreams and desires when it awakes in spring-time, would it not answer, 'To set on every twig a cluster of blossoms, with the fire of the rising sun, and the soul of sweet odor in each of them?'"—*Hutchison*. The resurrection of the rosebush is in the foliage and flowers of spring. No life is complete without the resurrection, and every true soul longs for its own fulfilment in the resurrection life.

LESSON X. — JUNE 9.

THE WALK TO EMMAUS. — LUKE 24: 13-32.

Golden Text. — *He opened to us the scriptures.* — LUKE 24: 32.

THE SECTION includes Luke 24: 13-35, and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNT in Mark 16: 12, 13.

THIS IS THE FOURTH APPEARANCE of Jesus after his resurrection.

TIME. Easter Sunday, April 9, A. D. 30, in the afternoon of the same day with our last lesson.

PLACE. Emmaus, a village sixty furlongs, *i. e.*, seven or eight miles, from Jerusalem. The name means *warm water*, probably for baths. The site is uncertain. (1) The common opinion has been that it is at Kulonieh (Colonia, or colony, where Titus settled a colony of eight hundred of his veteran soldiers), eight miles northwest of Jerusalem. (2) Dr. Hovey is satisfied that the place is the pretty valley Urtas, a little south of Bethlehem, where there is a copious supply of water. This was recognized by the British consul at Jerusalem, James Finn. (3) Canon Tristram says (1890): "The place, however, has been recently recovered, in a ruined village called Khamasa, a natural corruption of the Hebrew Hammath, or Emmaus; that is, 'the baths.' It is eight miles, or sixty-four furlongs, southwest of Jerusalem, and there are five good springs very near it, from which, doubtless, the name was derived." The fountains cause it to be rich in gardens, and abundant in fruit trees.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Clē'ōpas or Clēō'pās; Emma'ūs; Măgdālē'ně.

13. And,¹ behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

And behold, two of them 13
were going that very day to
a village named Emmaus,
which was threescore fur-
longs from Jerusalem.

14. And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

And they communed with 14
each other of all these things
which had happened.

¹ Mark 16: 12.

EXPLANATORY.

I. An Afternoon Walk. — Vs. 13, 14. Jesus appeared three times in the morning of the first Easter day, and then left the disciples to become gradually accustomed to the fact of his resurrection. But in the afternoon (v. 29) of **that same day** he appeared to **two of them**. It is expressly implied in verse 33 that they were not apostles. One was Cleopas (an abbreviation of Cleopatros), of whom we know nothing, for the name is not the same as Clopas (=Alphæus) (John 19: 25). — *Cambridge Bible*. The other one's name is unknown. **To a place called Emmaus.** (See *Place*.) **About threescore furlongs.** A furlong was four hundred cubits, or six hundred to seven hundred feet; so that sixty furlongs would be seven or eight miles.

*The Walk to
Emmaus.*

14. And they talked together of all these things. Their conversation naturally turned on the, to them, all-absorbing question of the hour, — the unlooked-for fate of their revered teacher, the sudden overthrow of their hopes, and the startling and incredible news of his resurrection. — *Professor Kendrick*.

RELIGIOUS CONVERSATION. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another," is always true when there is much interest in religion, and the effect is close at hand. "And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." For conversation is one of the means by which a rough stone is changed into a jewel. Oliver Wendell Holmes says that he did not talk to assert what he thought, but to find out what he thought. Conversation, too, is creative. It generates new thought, and throws new illumination upon affairs. "There are subjects worthy of your earnest thought, which can be sifted in conversation as they cannot be in solitary thought. Stimulus, inspiration, and increase of knowledge, and an enlargement of view are often gained through well-directed conversation. As you walk to and from your business, or your place of study, or the church, as you sit, or as you journey with a friend, how much do you gain out of the

*Conference Meet-
ings.*

15. And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, ¹ Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

16. But ² their eyes were holden that they should not know him.

17. And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another, as ye walk, and are sad?

18. And the one of them, ³ whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days?

And it came to pass, while ¹⁵ they communed and questioned together, that Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.

But their eyes were holden ¹⁶ that they should not know him.

And he said unto them, ¹⁷ (a) What communications are these that ye have one with another, as ye walk? And they stood still, looking sad.

And one of them, named ¹⁸ Cleopas, answering said unto him, (b) Dost thou alone sojourn in Jerusalem and not know the things which are come to pass there in these days?

¹ Matt. 18: 20.

³ John 19: 25.

² John 20: 14; 21: 4.

(a) Gr., *What words are these that ye exchange one with another.*

(b) Or, *Dost thou sojourn alone in Jerusalem, and knowest thou not the things.*

conversation?" — *H. C. Trumbull*. "Those Christians lose very much who are habitually absent from the church conference. If there be one institution on the earth which has evidenced its absolute right to be and to live, it is the old-fashioned prayer-meeting." — *C. S. Robinson*. "It may be compared to the increase of sounds by a number of echoes, or of light by a number of mirrors; or to the blaze of a heap of firebrands, each of which would have gone out if kindled separately, but which, when thrown together, help to kindle each other." — *Archbishop Whately*.

II. Jesus Joins in the Conversation. — Vs. 15-17. 15. While they communed, the same word as *talked together* in verse 14. The conversation "flowed like waters after summer showers." And reasoned, more exactly, *questioned*, or debated together. The subject engaged their deepest interest, and they were discussing with each other the possible reconciliation of difficulties and clearing up of their perplexity. — *Am. Com.* They were so absorbed that they did not notice at first when *Jesus himself drew* (was drawing) *near*. "The use of the *imperfect* here is very beautiful. *Jesus was already walking* with them when they observed him." — *M. R. Vincent*. And went with them, joined them in their walk.

OBSERVE. We are accustomed to say "Speak of angels and you will hear the rustling of their wings." "We do not sufficiently realize that if any two of us will make Jesus the subject of our conversation, he himself will be of our company." — *Trumbull*.

16. But their eyes were holden. In what way it is not said, but a partial explanation is found in Mark 16: 12, where it is said that he appeared in another form, or external appearance. His body must have been the same with which he died and rose again. (1) There may have been an intentional holding of their eyes. (2) They had not the slightest expectation of seeing him, and in their absorption did not take particular notice of the stranger beyond his general appearance, which was probably that of a rabbi or scribe. (3) There was an entire change of dress, for the soldiers had taken possession of the dress in which the disciples were accustomed to see Jesus. (4) Certain natural effects of his agony in the garden and on the cross would appear in his countenance and perhaps in his voice, and tend to prevent casual recognition.

THE REASON was probably because "immediate recognition would have prevented the quiet instruction which followed by putting them into a tumult of joy, fear, and doubt, as usual in our Lord's miracles." — *Riddle*.

17. Jesus began with oriental freedom to enter into their conversation with the question, **What** (omit manner of) **communications**, words, that ye have one to another; literally, *throw back and forth to each other*. As Tennyson says, "Discussed a doubt and tossed it to and fro." The question implies that they were discussing with some earnestness. And are sad. Rather, "downcast"; not merely a passing sadness, but as if their hopes were blighted, and they could not lift up their heads again. — *Sadler*. "Their thoughts are lingering behind, clinging to the dark crest of Calvary, as the cloud-pennon clings to the Alpine peak." — *Burton*. Note the punctuation and reading of the R. V., they stopped for a moment in their walk.

III. A Review of the Situation. — Vs. 18-24. 18. And the one of them whose name was Cleopas (see on v. 13) said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem? The literal rendering is, *Dost thou alone sojourn at Jerusalem and not know?* Have you just come, and so not heard? or do you live wholly alone, and hence do not

Why Jesus Was not Recognized.

19. And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, ¹ which was a prophet ² mighty in deed and word before God and all the people:

20. ³ And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him.

21. But we trusted ⁴ that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to-day is the third day since these things were done.

22. Yea, and ⁵ certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre;

23. And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

And he said unto them, ¹⁹ What things? And they said unto him, The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how ²⁰ the chief priests and our rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

But we hoped that it was ²¹ he which should redeem Israel. Yea and beside all this, it is now the third day since these things came to pass.

Moreover certain women ²² of our company amazed us, having been early at the tomb: and when they found ²³ not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive.

¹ Matt. 21: 11. Luke 7: 16.
John 3: 2; 4: 19; 6: 14.

² Acts 7: 22.
³ Luke 23: 1. Acts 13: 27, 28.

⁴ Luke 1: 68; 2: 38. Acts 1: 6.
⁵ Luke 24: 9, 10. Matt. 28: 8. Mark 16: 10. John 20: 18.

know? "The inquiry in verse 18 would be natural enough even in New York or Philadelphia to-day; but they had no newspapers in Jerusalem. It might be possible that a great fire should occur in the morning in one part of a great city to-day, and the other part not hear of it till the next day." — *Prof. I. H. Hall.*

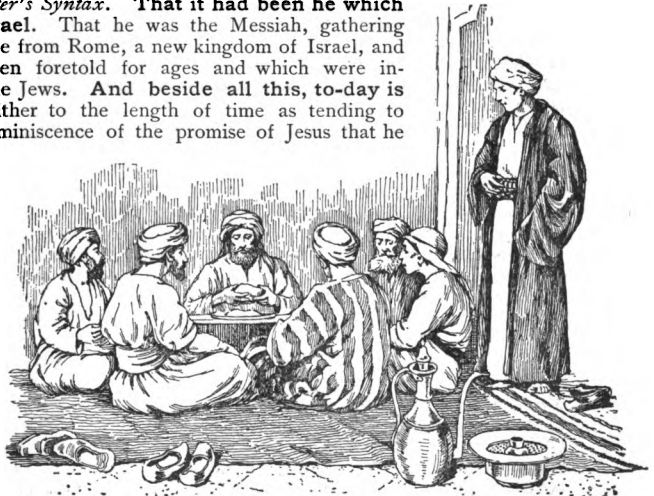
19. And he said unto them, What things? In order to draw out their opinions. A prophet, mighty in deed and word before God. However the death of Jesus may have made them waver in their faith that he was the Messiah, the Redeemer, they had no doubt that he was a prophet, for they knew what he had done, and had heard his teachings. They stood on a firm basis of fact.

20. Our rulers . . . have crucified him. Treated him as a malefactor, not as a prophet, and cut him off from his work.

21. But we trusted. Rather, *we hoped, we were hoping*; "with hope stronger than faith." — *Stier*. The imperfect implies that this had been their habitual expectation for some period of time. — *Webster's Syntax*. That it had been he which should have redeemed Israel. That he was the Messiah, gathering around himself the deliverance from Rome, a new kingdom of Israel, and all the glories which had been foretold for ages and which were wrought into the hopes of the Jews. And beside all this, to-day is the third day, referring either to the length of time as tending to extinguish hope, or to a reminiscence of the promise of Jesus that he would rise on the third day, and hence the reports may be true and there is hope.

Vs. 22-24. Here is a brief review of the incidents of our last lesson; with its doubts, since he had yet appeared to the women only, and not to the apostles who went to examine. And yet it seemed true.

22. Made us astonished, rather, as R. V., amazed us. The original verb means "to drive one out of his senses." — *Vincent*.



Sitting at Meal.

24. And ¹ certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not.

25. Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

26. Ought ² not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?

27. And ³ beginning at ⁴ Moses and ⁵ all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

And certain of them were with us went to tomb, and found it even as the women had said: him they saw not.

And he said unto them, O foolish men, and slow heart to believe (c) in all the prophets have spoken. Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things, and enter into his glory?

And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets interpreted to them in the scriptures the things concerning himself.

¹ Luke 24: 12.

³ Luke 24: 45.

⁵ Psa. 16: 9, 10; 22.

Isa. 7: 14;

(c) O

² Luke 24: 46. Acts 17: 3.

⁴ Gen. 3: 15; 22: 18.

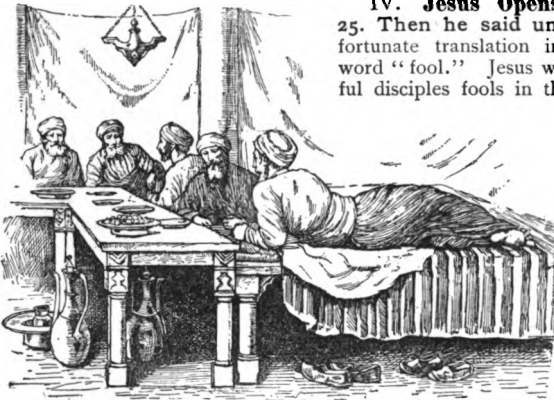
40: 10, 11; 53.

Jer. 23: 5.

1 Pet. 1: 11.

Num. 21: 9.

Ezek. 34: 23.



Reclining at Meal.

IV. Jesus Opens the Scriptures. — Vs. 25. Then he said unto them, O fools. This is fortunate translation in the light of the popular use word "fool." Jesus would never have called these faithful disciples fools in that sense. The word is equivalent

dull of perception, and *retard of their understanding*, as the phrase, *slow of heart*, goes and contemplates the *regretful feeling and moral responsibility*. M. R. Vincent. Christ points the two fruitful causes of error: (1) Lack of personal view, independent thought. Reluctance to receive truth is opposed to time and place in other words, intellectual and spiritual torpor. — *Abbot* believe (in, to rely upon) *the prophets have spoken* emphasis lies on *all*. The relieved a portion of what

prophets had taught; but many things they could not reconcile with what they did and others were distasteful, and had become neglected. There is the same danger in our study of God's Word.

26. Ought not (the) Christ (the Messiah) to have suffered these things? not these things foretold in the Scriptures as characterizing the Messiah, and the necessary mark by which whoever claimed to be the Messiah might be tested? Was not a part of the Messiah's work, without which his redemption could not succeed, kingdom be established? The very things which shook their faith in Jesus as the Messiah were essential to his Messiahship. *The Messiah De*

THE TESTIMONY OF MOSES. 27. And beginning at Moses. *in the Script* The promise to Eve (Gen. 3: 15); the promise to Abraham (Gen. 22: 18); the paschal lamb (Ex. 12); the scapegoat (Lev. 16: 1-34); the serpent (Num. 21: 9); the greater prophet (Deut. 18: 15); the star and sceptre 24: 17); the smitten rock (Num. 20: 11; 1 Cor. 10: 4), etc. — *Cambridge Bible*.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE PROPHETS. And all the prophets. Immanuel (Isa. "Unto us a child is born," etc. (Isa. 9: 6, 7). The good shepherd (Isa. 40: 3). The meek sufferer (Isa. 50: 6). He who bore our griefs (Isa. 53: 4, 5). The (Jer. 23: 5; 33: 14, 15). The heir of David (Ezek. 34: 23). The ruler from Be (Mic. 5: 2). The branch (Zech. 6: 12). The lowly king (Zech. 9: 9). The victim (Zech. 12: 10). The smitten shepherd (Zech. 13: 7). The messenger covenant (Mal. 3: 1). The sun of righteousness (Mal. 4: 2); and many other p — *Cambridge Bible*.

28. And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and ¹ he made as though he would have gone further.

29. But ² they constrained him, saying, Abide with us; for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them.

And they drew nigh unto 28 the village, whither they were going: and he made as though he would go further.

And they constrained him, 29 saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is now far spent. And he went in to abide with them.

¹ Gen. 32: 26; 42: 7. Mark 6: 48.

² Gen. 19: 3. Acts 16: 15.

TESTIMONY OF ALL THE SCRIPTURES. In all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. Dr. Davison, in his admirable and standard book on *Prophecy*, pp. 266-287, shows that there is not one of the prophets without some distinct reference to Christ, except Nahum, Jonah (who was himself a Jewish Ceremonies type and prophetic sign), and Habakkuk, who, however, uses the *Prefiguring Christ*. memorable words quoted in Romans 1: 17.—*Cambridge Bible*. In addition to direct testimony, the whole ceremonial of the Jewish religion foreshadowed him. (1) The sacrifices; (2) the Passover, with its slain lamb; (3) the daily sacrifices; (4) the scapegoat; (5) the day of atonement; (6) the high priest.

God's oracles grew luminous as he spake;
And light from darkness sprang, as day from night.

— Bickersteth.

OPENING THE SCRIPTURES. Any one can easily know enough of the Scriptures to see the way to heaven, and to be guided safely through life; as a child may know enough of nature for the ordinary purposes of living. Yet, as in God's works of nature there are untold treasures, and all that even modern science has gained is but a little spray from the great ocean, a small sheaf from the boundless harvest of good things God has laid up for man's blessing, so there are yet untold treasures in the Word of God. We are like children who, having learned to read and spell, imagine that we have some conception of the vast and glorious literature into which the simple letters of the alphabet can be formed.

"Upward we press, the air is clear
And the sphere-music heard;

The Lord hath yet more light and truth
To break forth from his word."

"How fruitful are the seeming barren places of Scripture. Wheresoever the surface of God's word doth not laugh and sing with corn, there the heart thereof within is merry with mines, affording, where not plain matter, hidden mysteries."—*Fuller's Good Thoughts in Bad Times*.

V. Jesus Reveals Himself.—Vs. 28-32. 28. The village. Emmaus, probably the home of one of them. He made as though he would have gone further, as he must do as a matter of decorum, unless he were invited to remain. He certainly would have gone had he not been invited.

29. But they constrained him. Pressed him with urgent entreaties and arguments. Their desire to have him remain and their sincere welcome constrained him to remain. And he went in. To the house where they were going, probably the house of one of them. To tarry (*abide*, as before) with them.

ABIDE WITH ME.

Abide with me! fast falls the eventide,
The darkness deepens. Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,

Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me!
Come not to sojourn, but abide with me.

— Lyte.

1. *Jesus will not remain where he is not wanted.* He comes to us, he makes himself known, he shows his willingness and power; but if we will not constrain him to abide with us, then he will pass on. This is true of churches, and of our own hearts.

2. *How can we constrain him to abide with us?* The same principles apply as in the welcome of a guest. (1) We must feel our welcome with warm hearts. (2) We must express the desire and the invitation urgently. (3) We must put away whatever would be disagreeable to him. (4) We must entertain him with our best, and make his stay as delightful as possible. (5) We must be in sympathy *Jesus Abiding with Us*. with his plans and his work, and converse with him about them. Then will he abide in our hearts, our homes, and our churches.

3. *The blessings that flow from the abiding presence of Jesus.* His personal friendship and love; his words of wisdom and help; new life; new light; new power; new inspiration; new piety and devotion.

30. And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them,¹ he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them.

31. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight.

32. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures?

And it came to pass, when 30
he had sat down with them
to meat, he took the (d)
bread, and blessed it, and
brake, and gave to them.

And their eyes were 31
opened, and they knew him;
and he vanished out of their
sight.

And they said one to an- 32
other, Was not our heart
burning within us, while he
spoke to us in the way, while
he opened to us the scrip-
tures?

¹ Matt. 14: 19.

(d) Or, loaf.

Come, Lord, to us, and let us walk with thee;
Come, and unfold the words of heavenly life,

Till our souls burn within us, and the day
Breaks, and the Day-Star rises in our hearts.
— Bickersteth.

30. **Sat at meat**, reclined at the table. **He took bread**, or the loaf, thus assuming the position of master, as he was accustomed to do with his disciples. **And blessed it**, Gave thanks, as was customary for the one at the head of the table. Compare "Where MacGregor sits, there is the head of the table."

31. **And their eyes were opened**. Whatever had hitherto held their eyes (v. 16) was taken away. The closer inspection, the customary manner of the master suddenly revealed to them who their guest was; and all was confirmed by the fact that **he vanished out of their sight**, like one of supernatural power, not like an ordinary guest. "Like a dream the veil is rent." "His place is empty, but his love is there."

OPENED EYES. Many a time the Lord is near us and we know it not. He comes in his strange providences, he comes in the ordinary duties of life, he comes in nature, he comes in opportunities to do good, he comes in prayer and prayer meetings; and we do not always recognize his presence. We are like those persons who are blind to certain colors, or deaf to certain sounds, and there is a music of grace heard only by those whose spiritual ears God has opened. Only the pure in heart can see God. But if we press Jesus to abide with us, he will open our eyes that we may see him and know him. He opens our eyes (1) by his Holy Spirit; (2) by opening to us the Scriptures in their larger and fuller meaning, through faithful spiritual study; (3) by holy conversation with others; (4) by new degrees of love and higher Christian experience, as the higher one climbs a mountain the wider is the prospect spread before his vision, like the Promised Land before Moses on Pisgah's mountain; (5) by earnest work for Christ; (6) by faithful performance of our daily duties and obedience to each truth revealed; (7) by new developments of his kingdom.

32. **Did not our heart burn within us**. Their hearts were glowing with feeling and interest, with kindling desires after a better life, with love, and joy, and hope, with sympathy, with increasing knowledge, with new light on old truths, with visions of new truth. Their souls seemed to be aflame. **While he opened to us the Scriptures?** The Old Testament, which included their entire scriptures.

Soon after Jesus left them, they hastened back to Jerusalem, to report the wonderful interview to the other disciples.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

On the site of Emmaus, see Mrs. Finn's article in the *Quarterly Statement of the Palestine Exploration Fund* for 1883; Andrew's *Life of Christ*, Edersheim and others; Davison's *Discourses on Prophecy*; Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*; E. Harold Brown's *The Fulfilment of the Old Testament Prophecies*; *A Lawyer's Examination of the Bible*, by H. H. Russell, LL.B. (Revell); Andrew Murray's *Jesus Himself* (Revell); Foster's *Cyclopædia of Poetical Illustrations, Second Series*, No. 3394-3396, especially the one by Bickersteth; Cowper's *Poems*, "Conversation," quoted in part in the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*, on Luke 24: 35; the story of "Eyes and No Eyes," in Mrs. Barbauld's *Evenings at Home*; *The Hymns*, "A Little Talk with Jesus" and "Abide with Me"; "Lost or Latent Powers of the Five Senses," by Dr. Alex. Grossart in *Expositor* for August, 1891.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. The value of frequent conversation about the things concerning Christ.
2. "Whenever two walk together and have Christ for their theme and in their hearts, he will walk between them." — *Trumbull*.
3. Our eyes are often holden from seeing Christ, because he appears in unexpected ways, — in troubles, in calls to work, in the persons of the poor, in impulses to a better life.
4. Christianity is not the religion of the credulous. Only the compulsion of fact and reason made even the disciples believe.
5. The Old Testament is full of Christ; and we can understand Christ's work by means of the prophecies and types which he fulfilled.
6. God's word is like God's world, full of riches, helps, powers, blessings unseen and unknown, but gradually revealed as men are able to receive them. A most earnest prayer should be that our eyes may be opened to see the beauty of Christ's character, the truths of his word, the realities of spiritual things, the doors to usefulness. If we wish Christ to abide with us, we must constrain by our love, our desire, our prayers, our preparations, our willingness to obey.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SUBJECT: CHRIST REVEALED TO HIS DISCIPLES.

By following closely the lesson, putting it in its place among the ways Jesus made himself known to his disciples, we see how their minds were being gradually prepared by faith and knowledge for the glorious development of the kingdom of heaven to be built upon the foundation, Jesus the Christ.

Illustration. POWER OF CONVERSING TOGETHER. "What would remain to me if this art of appropriation were derogatory to genius? Every one of my writings has been furnished to me by a thousand persons, a thousand things; wise and foolish have brought me, without suspecting it, the offering of their thoughts, faculties, and experience. My work is an aggregation of beings taken from the whole of nature; it bears the name of Goethe." — *Goethe*.

Illustration. An English writer says of the "suggestion to the effect that one and one stand for more than two. A child with one bit of paint (yellow) can produce one color; with two bits (yellow and blue), he can produce three colors; and with three (yellow, blue, and red), all the colors of the rainbow. So with a musical pitchpipe (say C) one sound can be produced; with two (C and E), three sounds; and with three (C, E, G), seven sounds." So one alone has a certain value, but two minds are worth more than twice as much as either one. One form of knowledge is valuable; two, more than double the value to any one person.

Illustration. The Scriptures are like a mine, over which we have often walked without knowing the treasures beneath our feet. They are like the powers of nature, which have always contained the treasures of the telegraph, of gas for lighting, of coal for warming, and yet men did not know these riches for ages.

Illustration. The early miners in California Gulch were harassed by a heavy black sand. When wiser men came and developed Leadville from that black sand, the first ones said of themselves, "O fools, not to know value when we see it." In every age some men are driven away by their own doubts, conceits, and want of consideration, while others come to the same words and find the gold-paved, pearl-gated, and glory-lighted city of God, — nay, God himself. — *Bp. Warren*.

Illustrations. OPENING THE SCRIPTURES. (1) The Scriptures are like a mansion with many rooms opening into one another. You open one door, and it reveals several other doors. The more we study the Scriptures, the more we see there is to learn. It is the same with nature. A piece of glass becomes a lens by which whole worlds are revealed in heaven. The electricity, which in some form has been known for ages, becomes light and power. (2) We can often see a thing very clearly after it is pointed out to us, which yet entirely escaped our notice before. A picture explained by an artist has been a new picture ever since, though we had seen it many times. A fact of nature pointed out by a scientist has illumined some portions of God's works which were unknown before. Ruskin's fifth volume of *Modern Painters* has opened the eyes of many to see in clouds and trees and leaves a multitude of things which were unseen, though plain before the eyes. The same is true of many of the best books.

LESSON XI. — JUNE 16.

PETER AND THE RISEN LORD. — JOHN 21: 4-17.

Golden Text. — *Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.*
 JOHN 21: 17.

THE SECTION includes the fifth, sixth, and seventh appearances of Jesus recorded in John 20: 19-21: 23; Luke 24: 36-43; 1 Corinthians 15: 5.

TIME. — After April 16, A. D. 30; but probably not many days after, for this appearance of Jesus followed next after the one on that Sunday evening.

PLACE. — The northern shore of the Sea of Galilee. Probably near Capernaum, where the disciples had often fished and near the homes of some of them.

THE APPEARANCES OF JESUS. — Jesus during two weeks beginning April 9 appeared seven times to his disciples. To Mary, to the women, to Peter, and to Cleopas and his friend, and to the apostles on Sunday, the ninth of April. To the twelve again the following Sunday evening, and now for the seventh time to seven of the apostles by the Sea of Galilee.

"Clear silver water in a cup of gold,
 It shines — his lake — the sea of Chinnereth —
 The waves he loved, the waves that kissed his feet
 So many blessed days. Oh, happy waves!
 Oh, little silver happy sea!"

"O Galilee, sweet Galilee,
 Where Jesus loved so much to be;
 O Galilee, blue Galilee,
 Come sing thy song again to me."

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Apostles go to Galilee to Meet Jesus. — The very morning of the resurrection the angels in the tomb sent a message by the women to whom they appeared, that the disciples were to go into Galilee, and Jesus would appear to them there (Matt. 28: 7). Accordingly the eleven (Matt. 28: 16) went away into Galilee, and waited for the special appearing of Jesus there. The reason they did not go immediately on receiving the message from the angels was doubtless because they needed preparation for that momentous meeting, and because Jesus at his appearance that same evening made a definite appointment, and they went just before the time. The place was to be a mountain. But while waiting for the appointed time, seven of them go to the Sea of Galilee near their homes and the scene of their former labors. These seven were Peter, Thomas, Nathanael, James, and John, and two others (v. 2). Peter naturally suggests that they try their hand at their old business of fishing, now for two years neglected. The expression "the" boat, not "a" boat, renders it probable that he went in one of their old fishing-boats, perhaps Peter's, long disused. — *Hutchinson*. The rest fall in with his plan. (1) They were waiting for the time appointed to meet Jesus, and must do something; and it was not yet time for them to preach about Jesus. (2) They probably needed to do something for their own support. Idleness and needless dependence on others are not Christian virtues. So Paul worked at tent-making. (3) They may have had some impulse to revive old memories. (4) The best way of waiting for further manifestations and clearer visions of Jesus is in the faithful performance of present duties. Indeed, in great sorrow it is a blessing to be compelled to work in the line of ordinary duties.

Reasons for Fishing.

II. The Night of Unrequited Toll. — Vs. 4, 5. "The seven disciples toiled all night where blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-nots of the angels." But not a fish came into their nets. They did not cease their efforts, but continued till the morning dawned. Jesus was teaching them that toil, day and night, for men, without him, without the Spirit which he sends, is in vain. They would begin to understand what he meant when he bade them tarry in Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high (Luke 24: 49). It would be useless to begin their work for men before.

REFLECT in how precarious a position the whole future of the world is. That boat carries the earthly hope of the church; and as we weigh the feelings of the men that are in it, what we see chiefly is how easily *The World's Hopes at the Mercy of the Sea.* the whole of Christianity might here have broken short off, and never have been heard of, supposing it to have depended for its propagation solely on the disciples. — *Marcus Dods*. But God cares for his own. Every man is immortal till his work is done.

4. But when the morning was now come, Jesus stood on the shore; but the disciples knew ¹ not that it was Jesus.

5. Then ² Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No.

6. And he said unto them, ³ Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

7. Therefore ⁴ that disciple whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt *his* fisher's coat *unto him*, (for he was naked,) and did cast himself into the sea.

But when day was now ⁴ breaking, Jesus stood on the beach: howbeit the disciples knew not that it was Jesus.

Jesus therefore saith unto ⁵ them, Children, have ye aught to eat? They answered him, No.

And he said unto them, ⁶ Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes.

That disciple therefore ⁷ whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. So when Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him (for he was naked), and cast himself into the sea.

¹ John 20: 14.² Luke 24: 41.³ Luke 5: 4, 6, 7.⁴ John 13: 23; 20: 2.

4. **When the morning was now come**, literally, as R. V., was now breaking, was becoming, before the light was perfect. **Jesus stood on the shore** or beach, a smooth as distinguished from a rocky shore. **But the disciples knew not that it was Jesus**; partly from the distance and the twilight, partly because they did not expect to meet him here, but on the mountain, and partly because Jesus after his resurrection was known only as he chose (John 20: 14; Luke 24: 16).

5. **Jesus saith unto them**. "It has been supposed that our Lord asked this question in the character of a trader who had been watching for the return of the boats that he might buy, or that it was with the natural interest every one takes in the success of a person that is fishing."—*Dods*. **Children, have ye any meat**, any fish. The word for food is equivalent to *what is added to bread at a meal*, especially fish. The expression expects a negative answer and is like the familiar, "Lads, you have not caught any fish, have you?"

III. **The Great Draught of Fishes**.—Vs. 6-8. **6. Cast the net on the right side of the ship (boat) and ye shall find**. As they evidently saw nothing strange in the direction to "cast the net on the right side," it is probable that they attributed it to the stranger seeing a shoal there. Shoals can often be discerned, from the higher level of a bank or cliff, by the color of the water, while the fisherman may be close to the fish without noticing them. In Cornwall, men are stationed on the cliffs to watch the sea, and give signals to the boats where to cast the nets for pilchards. The miracle lay in the large number of "great fishes" which the Lord's power brought to the spot at that moment.—*Stock*. Fish are very abundant in the Sea of Galilee, where may be seen "the shoals of them like shining continents."—*Carlyle*. **They were not able to draw it**. Up into the boat.

For the multitude of fishes.

There were 153 large ones (v. 11). The number was so unexpectedly great that they took pains to count them.

7. **That disciple whom Jesus loved**. Thus John modestly but lovingly speaks of himself, never once mentioning his own name in his Gospel. **Saith unto Peter, It is the Lord**. His loving heart first recognized his beloved Lord. Doubtless he remembered how Jesus had done a like wonder for them three years before (Luke 5: 1-11). Note how every trifling act betrays the character. John, with his deeper and quicker insight, first recognizes the Master;



Capernaum.
(Showing little of the Sea of Galilee.)

8. And the other disciples came in a little ship, (for they were not far from the land, but as it were two hundred cubits), dragging the net with fishes.

9. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

But the other disciples came 8 in the little boat (for they were not far from the land, but about two hundred cubits off), dragging the net *full* of fishes.

So when they got out upon 9 the land, they see (a) a fire of coals there, and (b) fish laid thereon, and (c) bread.

(a) Gr., a fire of charcoal.

(b) Or, a fish.

(c) Or, a loaf.

Peter first reaches him, casting himself impetuously into the sea. Recall the two at the tomb of Jesus, and once before on this lake. **Girt his fisher's coat.** This appears to have been a sort of loose garment, like the workmen's blouse of to-day. —

Abbott. He put on the coat, to show respect in the presence of **Character in Small Things.**

his Lord, and girded it so as not to impede his passage through the water. **For he was naked.** That is, stripped of all but his light under-garment. — *Westcott.* And did cast himself into the sea. In his impetuous desire to meet and welcome his Teacher and Lord, he could not wait for the little boat or his comrades, but plunged into the sea. He would prove his love in spite of his past fall. He had seen the risen Jesus before this, but no one knows what took place at the interview. He may now have desired to be reassured of Jesus' confidence and love.

8. In a little ship, a small boat belonging to the larger one, which could not come close to the beach. Two hundred cubits, 300 or 350 feet. **Dragging the net,** because there were too many fishes in it to allow them to take it into the boat.

There are two chief things which we are to do for men, — (1) bringing them to Jesus, and (2) caring for them after they are converted.

THE FIRST WORK, — BRINGING MEN TO JESUS IS TYPIFIED BY FISHING.

Jesus would remind the disciples of the time when, three years before this, some of them were fishing in this same lake, and he had called them to become fishers of men (Luke 5: 1-11; Matt. 4: 19). They then learned (1) that if men are to be brought into the kingdom, they must be sought for. Fish do **Fishers of Men.**

not come of themselves to our tables. (2) They must be sought patiently, carefully. (3) They can better be attracted than driven. (4) The right bait at the right season, rightly prepared and rightly presented, is essential to success. The work of the fisher is a work of art and skill rather than force. (5) Men catch fish for their own health and pleasure; but they catch men for the good of those caught, that they may have eternal life.

Now they are to learn other lessons in the same school. (1) That Jesus cared for their support, and is able all through their lives to give them a livelihood. (2) "That the higher duty glorifies, instead of degrades, the lower; that every business in which men can be engaged is a calling and a ministry." — *Hutchinson.* (3) That without Jesus they can do nothing. (4) That sometimes they must wait and toil without visible success for a time, but that Jesus sees and knows. (5) That through faith and obedience, guided by him, they may expect marvellous success, as was abundantly exemplified not many weeks later on the day of Pentecost.

"For his grace and love are such
Thou canst never ask too much."

The fish hidden long in "the many waters" of the world "depicts the church *invisible*"; "the breaking nets are imperfections and loss." "The Christian preacher, as the fisher of men, draws forth freely for God, by means of the hook of the life-giving Word, from the deep and bitter waves of this world, rather to give them new life than to destroy them." — *St. Paulinus of Nola.*

"Fisher of men, the blest,
Out of the world's unrest,

Out of sin's troubled sea,
Taking us, Lord, to thee."

II. A Morning Meal with Jesus. — Vs. 9-14. 9. As soon then as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there. Probably of charcoal, which is much used in Bible lands at the present day. And fish laid thereon, and bread. A simple meal, provided by Jesus for his morning repast, to which the apostles were invited as guests. Whether the provision was miraculous or not is not declared.

10. Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.

11. Simon Peter went up and drew the net to land full of great fishes, a hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.

12. Jesus saith unto them,¹ Come *and* dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

13. Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

14. This is now the ² third time that Jesus shewed himself to his disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.

15. So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon,³ *son* of Jonas, lovest thou me ⁴more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.

Jesus saith unto them, 10
Bring of the fish which ye
have now taken.

Simon Peter therefore 11
went (d) up, and drew the
net to land, full of great
fishes, a hundred and fifty
and three: and for all there
were so many, the net was
not rent.

Jesus saith unto them, 12
Come *and* break your fast.
And none of the disciples
durst inquire of him, Who
art thou? knowing that it
was the Lord.

Jesus cometh, and taketh 13
the (e) bread, and giveth
them, and the fish likewise.

This is now the third time 14
that Jesus was manifested to
the disciples, after that he
was risen from the dead.

So when they had broken 15
their fast, Jesus saith to Si-
mon Peter, Simon, *son* of
(f) John, (g) lovest thou me
more than these? He saith
unto him, Yea, Lord; thou
knowest that I (h) love thee.

¹ Acts 10: 41.

³ John 1: 42.

(d) Or, *aboard*.

(f) Gr., *Joannes*. See 1: 42, margin.

² John 20: 19, 26.

⁴ Comp. Matt. 26: 33.

(e) Or, *loaf*.

(g, h) *Love* in these places represents two
different Greek words.

10. Bring of the fish which ye have now caught. "The fruit of their own labors was to be joined to that which the Lord had provided on the shore. Thus in all their future labors Christ will give them that on which they have bestowed no labor, and yet to this will be added the fruits of their own toil, and yet even this will be the outcome of Christ's power rather than that of their own endeavors."—*Sadler*.

11. Simon Peter went up. On board the boat to help. Yet was not the net broken. So the gospel net can hold all who will come. Not one believer will be lost.

12. Come and dine. Rather, *Come, breakfast*; that is, take breakfast, or, *break your fast*; for the verb denotes partaking of the morning meal.—*Dr. Hovey*. Jesus recognized the needs of the body. The instrument must be cared for if we would do good work. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. They desire the assurance from his own word; and yet they were so certain that it was the Lord that they did not dare to show any doubt by asking him who he was. Augustine says that it means that the evidence was so strong that they did not dare even to doubt that it was he.

13. Jesus . . . taketh bread and giveth them. It is not said here that Jesus ate with them; but it seems probable that he did, since he ate broiled fish and honeycomb with the two disciples at Emmaus (Luke 24: 42, 43). This invitation to eat with Jesus may have been meant to complete his object-lesson to them as fishers of men. They were taught that if they gave themselves up to the work of the gospel, they should find in that work all they needed for the necessities of the body, and should eat bread with him in his kingdom above at the marriage feast of the Lamb.

14. This is now the third time that Jesus shewed himself. To the disciples as a body. This does not take into account his appearances to individuals. Great success tends to make the disciple humble, the reward is so vastly beyond all desert, or the labor bestowed. So Wordsworth says, "Alas, the gratitude of men hath oftenest left me mourning."

V. Peter Fully Restored.—Vs. 15-17. Note that Peter "had been called to the ministry after a miraculous draught of fishes; it is after a similar draught that the ministry is restored to him. He had lost his office by a denial beside a fire of coal; it is beside a fire of coal that he recovers it."—*Godet*.

THE SECOND WORK,—CARING FOR THE SOULS OF DISCIPLES,—IS TYPIFIED BY SHEPHERDING. 15. So when they had dined. Finished their breakfast. Jesus saith to Simon Peter. It is necessary, if we would fully understand this passage, to call attention to

16. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, ¹ Feed my sheep.

He saith to him again a 16 second time, Simon, son of (f) John, (g) lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that (h) I love thee.

¹ Acts 20: 28. 1 Pet. 5: 2.

(f, g) See p. 171.

some of the delicate shades of meaning in the Greek, which do not appear in our English translation, and which it is difficult to make clear in any translation. Jesus uses the word *love* three times in his questions, and Peter uses it three times in his answers. But in the original, the word for love (*ἀγαπᾷ*) which Jesus uses in his first two questions is a different word from that which Peter uses for love (*φιλέω*) in all his answers. In the third asking Jesus uses Peter's word. "The word which Christ uses in his question, *Lovest thou me?* (*ἀγαπᾷ*) signifies if not the higher, at least the more thoughtful and reverential affection which, founded on an intelligent estimate of character, and accompanied by a deliberate and well-considered choice. Peter's *I love thee* represents rather the personal, instinctive love, the activity of feeling, rather than of will, the affection which, being spontaneous and instinctive, gives no account of *Lovest Thou Me?* itself, and no reason for its existence. We are bid in the New Testament to exercise the first form of love (*ἀγαπᾷ*) towards God, but never the second; while the Father is said to exercise both forms towards his own Son. Two different Greek words are also rendered indiscriminately *feed*. To indicate the difference, I have rendered one by the rare but indispensable verb *shepherd*. Finally, three words are used to represent the flock which Christ commends to Peter's care,—*lambs* (*ἀρνία*), *sheep* (*πρόβατα*), and *little sheep* (*προβάτια*) (the latter perhaps a term of special affection)."—Abbott. The whole may be brought before us in one view by the following from *Schaff*:

Questions.	Answers.	Commands.
1. Lovest thou me more than these?	I dearly love thee.	Feed my lambs.
2. Lovest thou me?	I dearly love thee.	Shepherd my sheep.
3. Dost thou love me dearly?	I dearly love thee.	Feed my sheepings.

Simon, son of Jonas. A contraction for *John*. Jesus does not now speak to him as Peter the rock; for that would imply a sarcasm, so little like a rock had Peter acted. **Lovest thou me more than these?** "More than these, thy companions, love me,"—a gentle yet distinct enough reminder of that former saying:—

Though all men should be offended, I never will. — *Hanna*.

"Peter's vehemence of welcome was most grateful to Jesus. It witnessed to an affection which was at this crisis the most valuable element in the world. Jesus hailed with the deepest satisfaction Peter's impetuous abandonment of his fishing gear and impatient springing to greet him, because as plainly as possible it showed that, after all, Christ was incomparably more to him than the old life."—*Dods*. Now he would bring out the love more fully by confession. **Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.** What appears surprisingly beautiful on the part of the now humbled disciple is that in simplicity he passes over the *more*, and says, not "*I love thee more than these*," but "*Thou knowest that I love thee*."—*R. Besser*. Failure had taught him humility, and therefore he will neither claim a preëminence in affection, nor adopt the word of the Saviour's question, which involved deep honor, and devotion, and esteem; but will substitute for it that weaker word, which yet best expressed the warm human affection of his heart.—*Farrar*. **He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.** "Feed" refers to the spiritual sustenance required by the flock of Christ. "Lambs" are the young whether in years or in Christian experience.

"Feeding his lambs would be the proof of Peter's love, and the means of increasing his love, and also the assurance from Jesus of restored confidence and favor, since he would intrust these tenderest ones to his care."—*Jacobus*. The Lord Jesus saw what has been confirmed in the experience of the church, that **Feeding the Lambs.** the success of the gospel among men depended on the care which the ministry would extend to those in early life.—*Barnes*. "Children are the preface to the book of life." "An adult converted is a unit; a child is a multiplication table." Dr. Tyng used to say that if the choice lay between one child or two adults, he would always decide for the child."

16. Feed my sheep. Tend or shepherd my sheep; a different word from the one translated *feed* in the previous verse. It includes watching, feeding, leading, guarding. To be a gospel fisherman and draw men into the

Shepherding the Sheep.

17. He saith unto him ¹ the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou ² knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

He saith unto him, Tend ¹⁷ my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of (J) John, (A) lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, (A) Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou (J) knowest that I (A) love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

¹ Comp. John 13: 38.

Matt. 26: 75.

² John 2: 24, 25; 16: 30.(A) See v. 15, l. c., and margin.
(J) Or, *perceivest*.

kingdom of God is one great work of disciples; but to shepherd those who are already in the fold, to feed with heavenly food, to lead to green pastures, to guard and warn from dangers, to guide into their true place and work is equally important. To rule is a small thing; to shepherd, a great one.

17. He saith unto him the third time. The three questions could not but recall the three denials; and the form of this last question could not but vividly bring back the thought of the failure of personal devotion at the moment of trial. — *Westcott*. Lovest thou me? This time using Peter's word for *love*. Peter was grieved. (1) At the reference to his failure; (2) at the implied doubt of his love. Feed my sheep, or, in another reading differing only by an "i," "little sheep," the dearest, choicest ones, or the tender and delicate who needed special care.

THE PURPOSE OF THESE QUESTIONS seems to have been: (1) To show Peter, who was "self-scorned, self-spoiled, self-hated, and self-slain," that Jesus knew his failures, and heartily forgave him. (2) To guard him against his natural self-confidence, lest he should again fall. (3) To publicly reinstate him among the disciples, and show to his brethren that he was fully restored. (4) To restore peace and hope within Peter's own soul. (5) To impress upon him that only in deep and earnest love to Jesus could he do his appointed work. (6) To set clearly before him the great work he was to do.

CONFIRMATION. The forecast of Peter's future which follows verses 18, 19 seems to have been for the purpose of encouraging him by the assurance that, however he may have failed in the past, he would, henceforth, go on boldly, even to crucifixion.

SUGGESTIVE THOUGHTS. (1) Compare Peter's restoration with the hopeless loss of Judas. For Peter's sin was but an eddy in the stream of an earnest and true character, while Judas' sin was the main stream and tide of his life. (2) I will not be offended at thy often inculcating the same precept, but rather conclude that I am much concerned therein, and that it is thy pleasure that the nail should be soundly fastened in me, which thou hast knocked in with so many hammers. — *Thomas Fuller*. (3) The work of the church, by its teachers and preachers, is to draw men to become disciples, and then, to feed and tend, to guard and guide them, especially the children, the undefended, and the weak.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Boardman's *Epiphanies of the Risen Lord* (Appleton); Hutchison's *Our Lord's Signs in St. John's Gospels* (T. & T. Clark); Trench on *The Miracles*; Dean Howson's *Meditations on the Miracles*. On fish and fisherman in the Sea of Galilee, see Josephus' *Jewish Wars*, Vol. III., 10, 7; Tristram's *Land of Israel*, p. 426; Thomson's *Land and Book*, new ed., II., 294; McGregor's *Rob Roy on the Jordan*, Chap. XX. *Poems* on this story in Foster's *Cyclopædia of Poetical Illustrations*, II., 3435-39; Trench on *Synonyms of the New Testament*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

While the teacher should teach all portions of this lesson, he can place emphasis on the first or the last portion according to the needs of his scholars.

Illustration. "The thickness of the shoals of fish in the Lake of Gennesareth is almost incredible to any one who has not witnessed them. They often cover an area of more than an acre; and when the fish move slowly forward in a mass, and are rising out of the water, they are packed so close together that it appears as if a heavy rain were beating down on

the surface of the water." — *Tristram, The Natural History of the Bible*, p. 285. The same phenomena may be observed in the mackerel fishing off the coast of New England, and "reminds one of what may be frequently seen in Bodensee, or Lake of Constance."

Illustration. The feelings of the disciples while waiting for Jesus to fulfil his promise that he would appear to them in Galilee as their risen Lord are thus represented by Arthur Clough:

"Ye men of Galilee!
Why stand ye looking up to heaven, where him ye ne'er may see
Neither ascending hence, nor returning hither again?
Ye ignorant and idle fishermen!
Hence to your huts, and boats, and inland native shore,
And catch not men, but fish;
Whate'er things ye may wish,
Him neither here nor there ye e'er shall meet with more.

Ye poor deluded youths, go home;
Mend the old nets ye left to roam;
Tie the split oar, patch the torn sail;
It was an idle tale —
He was not risen!"

Still, it is not possible that they were so hopeless. They were waiting in hope, perhaps doubting hope, for the Lord's time to come.

Illustration. However great a sinner a man may be, he need never despair at any time in his life of the divine mercy, for, as there is no tree so thorny, knotted, and gnarled but what it can be planed, polished, and rendered beautiful, so, in like manner, there is not a man in the world, however criminal, or however great a sinner he may be, but that God may convert him in order to adorn his soul with all the virtues and with the most signal graces. — *Fra Egidio*.

LESSON XII. — JUNE 23.

THE SAVIOUR'S PARTING WORDS. — LUKE 24: 44-53.

Golden Text. — *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.* — MATT. 28: 19.

THE SECTION includes the eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh appearances of Jesus and the ascension. Matthew 28: 16-20; Mark 16: 15-20; Luke 24: 44-53; Acts 1: 3-12; 1 Corinthians 15: 6, 7.

TIME. — Verses 44-49 are a summary of the teachings of Jesus during the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension.

The ascension was May 18, A. D. 30.

PLACE. — The ascension was from the Mount of Olives near Bethany.

THE MANIFESTATIONS OF JESUS. — Review from the table on page 154 the eleven different occasions when he appeared. Jesus appeared during forty days in this irregular and occasional manner, probably because this was a transition stage in the experience of the disciples, a connecting link between his visible presence for three years and his invisible presence ever after. For this purpose it was necessary (1) that he should appear often enough to give perfect proof that he was alive and the same Jesus they had known before. (2) That they should be trained to a realization of his divine nature and spiritual presence. (3) That by the ascension there should be an unbroken connection between the visible and the invisible manifestations.

THE SUMMARY OF INSTRUCTION. These verses are given by Luke in close connection with the appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem on the evening of the Sunday on which he arose, and after the return of the two disciples from Emmaus. It is possible they were spoken then; but, even if they were, they are still a summary of his teaching, which doubtless he repeated again and again, especially to the five hundred on the mountain in Galilee, and at the time of the ascension, in order to impress them indelibly upon the founders of the church.

44. And he said unto them,¹ These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me.

45. Then² opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures,

And he said unto them, 44 These are my words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you, how that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me.

Then opened he their 45 mind, that they might under-

¹ Luke 24: 6. Matt. 16: 21; 20: 18. Mark 8: 31; 9: 31.

² Acts 16: 14.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Scriptures Fulfilled in Christ.—V. 44. These are the (my) words. These events, pertaining to my death and resurrection, are the fulfilment of my words.—*American Commentary.* Which I spake unto you, at various times while I was yet with you. (See Luke 18: 33; Mark 10: 33.) These strange events which have staggered your faith should be the means of strengthening it, because they are the fulfilment not only of what I told you beforehand should take place, but of what was foretold ages before in the Scriptures. Which were written in the law of Moses. The first of the three divisions into which the Jews divided the Old Testament Scriptures. The law included the Pentateuch or first five books. And in the prophets, the second division, including the historical books from Joshua to 2 Kings (except Ruth), called the Former Prophets; and what we call the Prophets (except Daniel), called the Later Prophets. And in the psalms, which, as the leading book, gives the title to the third division, named also *Hagiographa*, which included the Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and all the other books not included in the other divisions. For references to what the Scriptures declare concerning the Messiah, see Lesson X. on the walk to Emmaus.

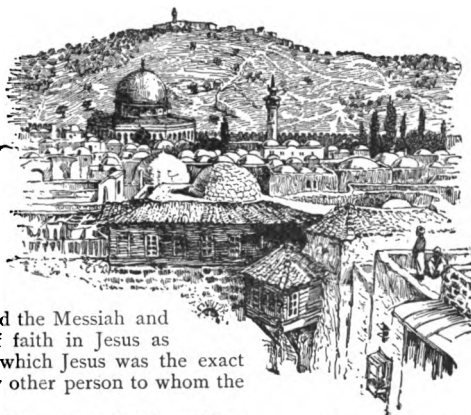
ILLUSTRATION. In the Cologne Cathedral hangs the original pencil drawing of the cathedral by Meister Gerard about 1250, "whose great genius conceived and put into existence these plans, whose fulfilment would require centuries of labor." The work was begun, but war and political changes left it unfinished. *Cologne Cathedral.* For several centuries the plans disappeared. Then, in new circumstances, these drawings were "hunted from garrets in which they had slumbered," and in 1830, almost six hundred years after the plans were made, work was again begun; but the building is not yet completed. So the Old Testament prophecies of Christ and his kingdom, dormant for centuries, began to be realized in Jesus, and are yet to be completed.

NOTE that while some of the prophecies were fulfilled in Christ's earthly life, many of them could be fulfilled only after his death, in the founding and upbuilding of his kingdom. (See Briggs' *Messianic Prophecy*.)

II. The Disciples' Minds Opened.

—V. 45. Then opened he their understanding. This is what first of all they needed as a preparation for their work of proclaiming the gospel. Thus alone would they understand God's plan of salvation; thus only would they know the full truth about Jesus the Christ; thus only would they avoid false ideas about Christ, and errors which would injure where he desired to bless. That they might understand the Scriptures, which show the beginning of the kingdom of God, upon which Jesus was to found the new kingdom; which foretold the Messiah and his work, and thus were the foundation of faith in Jesus as the Messiah. They present the picture of which Jesus was the exact realization; and there has never been any other person to whom the portrait would apply.

OPENING THE MIND. Jesus opened their minds (1) by making them willing to know and obey the truth. Sincerity of heart is the first condition. (2) He broke through the prejudices of early



The Mount of Olives.
(Looking Eastward from the
Pool of Hekziah.)

46. And said unto them,¹ Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:

stand the scriptures; and 46 he said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day;

¹ Psa. 22. Isa. 50: 6; 53: 2, etc. Acts 17: 3.

training and popular teachings, which were like mists over a landscape, or colored glasses before the eyes. (3) He explained to them the true meaning and bearing of the prophecies relating to the Messiah, and thus led them to the true principles of interpretation, to be applied as new circumstances required. (4) Larger experience and wider knowledge prepared their minds for a clearer and farther vision of the meaning of Scripture. The improvements in the telescope for seeing earthly things equally aid in new views of the stars of heaven. (5) The unfolding of the kingdom and the progress of events called attention to things unseen before, and made many things plain whose meaning was unknown till then.

EXAMPLES. The opening of the eyes of Elisha's servant at Dothan (2 Kings 6: 8-17). Hagar's eyes opened to see the well (Gen. 21: 19).

ILLUSTRATIONS. Edison's microphone has revealed a new world of hitherto unrecognizable sounds. Who so recently as five years ago would have credited that the walking of a fly across a window-pane, and even over a ceiling would be made audible? Yet it is so. The music of the spheres may yet be heard. One who travels in the East is much struck with the deliciousness of scents, perfumes, *New Powers of the* fragrances, sweet smells. The sense of smell is cultivated there. (I *Five Senses.* heard a professor say that we yet might have concerts of odors; solos, and harmonies of perfumes.) Note the wonderful power of the sense of smell in dogs, and of sight in the Bedouin and the Indians. So the sense of touch in Laura Bridgman and Helen Kellar is marvellously beyond our touch. I select one of many cases known to me. Miss A. B. was dying of consumption. Within a short time of her death, a radiance suddenly overspread her face, as if a gleam of morning sunshine had fallen upon it. She cried out in a rapture of joy, "O my Saviour, I am coming," and, turning to her friends, said, "Do you not see him? It is heaven to see him."—*Alexander B. Grosart, D.D., LL. D.* (See *Library References.*)

ILLUSTRATION. Almost every one has had the experience that certain books have opened their minds and revealed new worlds undreamed of before. Such to me have been Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Cooke's *The New Chemistry*, Muller's *Science of Language*, and others. Some new method of studying the Bible often brings a new revelation of its meaning, as by whole books, instead of isolated texts; the cathedral, instead of carved stones and painted windows.

ILLUSTRATION. Sir Robert J. Ball, professor in Cambridge University, describes the effect of photographing the stars, by an exposure of the sensitized surface for hours to the sky. Many a star is seen on the photograph which is invisible through the largest telescope, so that there are shown ten thousand stars on one photograph, each one of which is a shining sun. Some rays of light have an effect on the plate which make no impression on the eye. Nor can the eye look so long and steadily at the sky. (See *Youth's Companion*, March 22, 1894.) Long looking at the Scripture, with a mind prepared for the truth, will reveal glorious worlds invisible and unknown to the briefer glances of ordinary reading.

III. The Central Truths of the Gospel.—Vs. 46, 47. 46. And thus it behooved. Was fitting. The R. v. omits this expression and connects what follows with "It is written." The Christ to suffer and rise from the dead. These were the two great essential facts of the gospel. Christ made an atonement on the cross for the sins of the world, and he was raised again to prove his divinity, to reveal immortal life, and open heaven to the world.

47. And that repentance. The duty of repentance on the part of men, the motives for repentance revealed and emphasized by the cross, the aids to repentance by the assurance of God's forgiveness in Jesus Christ and by the gift of the Holy Spirit. And remission of sins. The forgiveness of sin, the removal of its punishment, and deliverance of the soul from the power of sin. Should be preached in his name. That is, "By the authority of Christ," and "Through the merit and mediation of Christ." These great truths are still "the power of God and the wisdom of God" for the salvation of men. The more perfectly a church holds, and lives, and teaches these truths the more pure and powerful will it be.

*Atonement.
Eternal Life.
Repentance.
Forgiveness.*

47. And that repentance and ¹ remission of sins should be preached in his name among ² all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

48. And ³ ye are witnesses of these things.

and that repentance (a) and remission of sins should be preached in his name unto all the (b) nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Ye are witnesses of these things.

¹ Dan. 9: 24. Acts 13: 38, 47. 1 John 2: 12.

² Gen. 12: 3. Psal. 22: 27. Isa. 49: 6, 22. Jer. 31:

34. Hos. 2: 23. Mic. 4: 2. Mal. 1: 11.

³ John 15: 27. Acts 1: (a) Some ancient authorities read unto.

8, 22; 2: 32; 3: 15.

(b) Or, nations. Beginning from Jerusalem, ye are witnesses.

IV. The Missionary Work of the Church. — Vs. 47, 48. 47. Among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. They were to begin at home, but by no means to remain there. This commission is given more fully in Matthew 28: 19 and Mark 16: 15, 16. These are the marching orders of the church, the bugle call to service and victory.

48. And ye are witnesses of these things. The idea contained in Luke 1: 2, "which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word," is here found once more. — *Slier*. The word "witnesses" afterwards meant "martyrs" (which is, in fact, the Greek word itself); for Christ's witnesses died to support their testimony. — *M. B. Riddle*. They had been with Jesus throughout his ministry, they had heard his teaching, they had seen his miracles, they knew his character, they had seen him after he rose from the dead, and now their work was to bear witness to these things. This they did by word of mouth during their lives. The gospel is built upon facts, not theories. The Gospels are the summary of this witness of the apostles. Matthew was one of the witnesses; Mark's Gospel is supposed to be the preaching of Peter, and Luke the preaching of Paul, who learned directly from Jesus himself (Gal. 1: 11, 12), and John was another of the witnesses. These Gospels were written many years after the apostles began to preach, and are the story that had been told many hundreds of times by these witnesses.

And still the power of preaching and of teaching is not in arguing, but in witnessing, in declaring the truths known and tested by experience.

Here belongs the great commission recorded in Matthew 28: 19 and Mark 16: 15, to make disciples of all nations, to baptize them, and to teach them the commands of Christ, for the salvation of individuals and of the world depends upon this. It implies (1) that Christianity is a universal religion, not merely one of the religions of the world; (2) that it is adapted to all nations and all classes (Rom. 1: 16), a claim which history has abundantly justified. — *Abbott*. The very soul of our religion is missionary, progressive, world-embracing; it would cease to exist if it ceased to be missionary, if it disregarded the parting words of its Founder. — *Max Müller*.

Illustrations. (1) Real light always shines, and the brighter the light, the farther it shines. (2) Flowing, moving water is pure. Stagnant water becomes impure. (3) The spinning top stands; stop its spinning, and it falls.

THE GOSPEL FOR THE WORLD. 1. This is the command of Christ. The church cannot be obedient, and let one nation be without the gospel. The duty is obligatory, not on ministers and missionaries alone, but upon the whole church. This commission was given, not to the apostles only, but to the whole body of five hundred disciples.

2. This command includes home missions as well as foreign; our own neighborhood as well as more distant places. But missionary effort must not



Church of the Ascension.
(Mount of Olives.)

Witnesses to the Truth.

The Universal Religion.

A Missionary Religion.

49. And,¹ behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

50. And he led them out² as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

And behold, I send forth⁴⁹ the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city, until ye be clothed with power from on high.

And he led them out until⁵⁰ they were over against Bethany: and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them.

¹ Isa. 44: 3. Joel 2: 28. John 14: 16, 26; 16: 7. Acts 1: 4; 2: 1, etc.

² Acts 1: 12.

be confined to the home field. Every nation needs the gospel as much as ours needs it.

3. It is the nature of a living Christianity to be missionary. Max Müller says that of all religions, only the missionary religions are living. That church is dead which is not anxious to preach the gospel to every creature.

4. This is the only way the church will keep pure. Nothing without this can keep the doctrine or life pure: organizations, creeds, persecutions — all have failed. But any church which seeks to save souls will keep pure, because it cannot do its work without the great main doctrines of Christianity.

5. The true *Broad Church* cares for the salvation of the world; the *Narrow Church* is the one that cares chiefly for itself and for temporal things.

6. The church at home is built up faster by working for the heathen.

7. The grandeur of this work exalts the individual Christians who give and labor.

8. It is blessed to have part in the final triumph of the gospel.

V. **The Power.** — V. 49. And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you. The promise of the gift of another Comforter contained in Christ's last conversation with the eleven (John 14: 16-20, 26; 15: 26, 27; 16: 13, 14). This was the promise of the Father, made in the Old Testament (Isa. 44: 3; Ezek. 36: 27; Joel 2: 28-32). (See Matt. 3: 11 and Acts 2: 17.) But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem. Make this your home. They waited for ten days after the ascension, praying, conversing, studying the Scriptures, thus being prepared for their great work. Then came the great day of Pentecost, when the promise of the Father was fulfilled, and each one received a consciousness of a new and mighty power, and felt, as man had never felt before, the presence and love of God. They would thus (1) all receive alike the power and observe its mighty effects. (2) It was a witness to the unity of the church. (3) Great multitudes from all lands would be present and carry the influence everywhere. Until ye be endued with power from on high. Compare Romans 15: 13, 19; 1 Corinthians 2: 4; 2 Corinthians 12: 9; Philippians 3: 10; 1 Thessalonians 1: 5. These references will give the student an idea of the meaning of Christ's promise. *Gift of the Holy Spirit.* It includes (1) the power of working miracles; (2) personal, moral, and spiritual power in the conflicts and temptations of life, and especially in bearing suffering and persecution for Christ's sake; (3) power in the ministry of the word beyond that which belongs to human eloquence and wisdom, or even to the mere natural adaptation of the truth to human wants; (4) power to overcome all enemies and hindrances.

The Holy Spirit had been in the world before this, as the Old Testament Scriptures abundantly testify, but now came the dispensation of the Spirit, *filling all*, and not a few, *abiding*, not occasional, in great abundance and power. Formerly the gift was like the dew, now it is like the rain; formerly like the early dawning light, now like the full splendor and power of the day.

ILLUSTRATION. An organ filled with the ordinary degree of air which exists everywhere is dumb. Throw in, not another air, but an unsteady current of the same air, and sweet, but imperfect and uncertain notes immediately respond to the player's touch; increase the current to a full supply, and every pipe swells with music. — *From William Arthur's Tongue of Fire.*

ILLUSTRATION. Mrs. Pearsall Smith, not long ago, said in an address that she often saw in Philadelphia the sign, *Rooms to let with power*. Such God offers us. All the places in which we are to work, all our duties, God gives us *with power* to make them effective; but we must accept and use the power that is given us.

VI. **The Ascension. The Ever Living Lord.** — Vs. 50-53. We now come to the close of the forty days during which Jesus had appeared to his disciples and instructed them. There were four more appearances after the one by the Sea of Galilee; the last of these was at Jerusalem whence he led them out as far as Bethany, in its vicinity on the Mount of Olives. And he lifted up his hands and blessed them. He expressed in word and

51. And ¹ it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven.

52. And ² they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy:

53. And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God.³ Amen.

And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he parted from them, (a) and was carried up into heaven.

And they (b) worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: and ⁵³ were continually in the temple, blessing God.

¹ 2 Kings 2: 11. Mark 16: 19. Acts 1: 9. Eph. 4: 8.

² Matt. 28: 9, 17.

³ Acts 2: 46; 5: 42.

(a) Some ancient authorities omit *and was carried up into heaven*.

(b) Some ancient authorities omit *worshipped him, and*.

act his divine blessing upon them, — a blessing which was real and powerful, and continues upon his people to this day.

51. **He was parted from them.** By beginning to ascend upwards. **And carried up into heaven.** The tense of the original is picturesque, and indicates a continued action, a gradual going up out of their sight. Compare the more detailed account, Acts 1: 9-11.

It was at this time, doubtless, that the great change came over his body described in 1 Corinthians 15: 51-53. When a cloud had received him out of their sight two angels bade them be comforted, for the time was coming when he should return. Of the present appearance of Jesus we have a hint in the Transfiguration, when "his face did shine as the sun and his raiment was white as the light" (Matt. 17: 2); and in the Revelation (1: 12-16), where he is seen with "eyes as a flame of fire, and his feet like unto fine brass as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters."

52. **And they worshipped him.** Acknowledging now that he was indeed divine, they gave him the religious worship due only to God. **And returned to Jerusalem with great joy.** Every sorrow had been turned into joy. The proof that Jesus was the Messiah had greatly increased; they saw how his death was the redemption of the world; they had learned how he could fulfil his promises; they saw new meaning in the Scriptures; they were full of love and joy in the Holy Spirit. It was like the blossoming of the night-blooming cereus, a marvel of beauty, upon its deformed and ugly stem.

53. **And were continually in the temple** at the hours of worship, just as we say of a regular attendant on Sabbath services that he always goes to church. **Blessing God**, for he was the source of all the good they had received.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. We have not a dead, but a living Saviour, to whom we shall go, and like whom we shall be in glory.

2. The hope of the church is in a living Saviour, who is ever present, and who is coming again in his kingdom.

3. The ascension was a noble and fitting close of the earthly career of Jesus; far better than to die again, as Lazarus did, or than to remain always on earth in his body, — the only alternatives.

4. It completed the proof of his divine nature and mission. It was the crowning of his life with success.

5. It showed the continued reality of Christ's existence, linking this world with the other, and showing how he could be the ever-living Saviour in heaven, whom Stephen saw at the right hand of God, who came to Paul on the way to Damascus, who is ever with his people, even to the end of the world.

6. It was an example of the change that is to be wrought in our bodies at the resurrection, as described by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15: 36-54, bringing life and immortality to light.

7. Through his ascension, and abiding on the right hand of God, he is enabled to be the omnipresent Saviour of all men, as would not be possible if he were in the body, though as king in Jerusalem.

8. Thus his children are taught to live by faith and not by sight, and are trained in character and manhood by the responsibility of carrying on his work.

9. He has gone to prepare a place for us, as well as us for the place.

10. The last view of Christ is not upon the cross, but ascending from Olivet into glory; not in agony of atonement, but in the act of blessing; not in seeming defeat, but in manifest triumph.

LESSON XIII.—JUNE 30.

REVIEW.

Golden Text.—*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.* — HEB. 12: 2.

I. **General Review.**—As we come to the close of Christ's life, we shall find great profit as well as interest in studying the *life of Christ as a whole*. Let us gaze at the picture of the dear Lord as he walked about Palestine working and teaching. Let us see his whole life from his coming from the Father in heaven, and the manger cradle, to the cross, the resurrection, and the return to heaven. Let us see his portrait, the marvellous picture of his perfect character, as revealed in the Gospels.

We have been studying the parts; now we will study it as a whole. We have been, as it were, looking at particular stars through a telescope, revealing a brightness and tints that no unaided eye can perceive; now we will look at the whole sky with all its beautiful constellations showing the glory of God. The individual events are like words written on the sky in letters so large that we can see but a word at a time, though full of meaning and blessing.

Now we will read the sentences which the words form, and see deeper meanings and fuller blessing.

The facts on this marginal chart should be learned by heart. They can be put on the blackboard, and repeated by the whole school. The facts can be filled in from the fuller chart on pages 6 and 7.

Special emphasis may be laid on the last scenes, since these come in the past quarter's study. In order to aid in making this portion clear, the following chart is given of the last days.

II. **Schoolroom Travels.**—One of the most helpful reviews is by means of an outline map drawn upon the blackboard. Or a common map may be used. Then, like the Greek scholar in *Tom Brown at Oxford*, who traced on a map by means of colored pins the famous retreat of the ten thousand under Xenophon, we may trace in the same way the journeys of Jesus from Bethlehem to Calvary. At each place we may call for a brief description of the town, and for the chief events which cluster around it. Or we may take the places more at random, recalling all we can about the place, and what Jesus did or taught there, and to what portion of his life they belong. On the blackboard colored chalk may mark the initials of these events. On a large map pins with fliers may note them.

III. **Word Picture Review.**—Nearly all the leading incidents in the life of Christ can be reviewed in this way: the teacher drawing a word-picture of the different events, and the scholars guessing what is described, and locating it both in time and place. Or to each scholar may be assigned some incident to be described, which the others guess. Some of these are:—

1. Christ riding, multitudes shouting, casting down garments and palm branches, children joining in the enthusiasm.
2. A supper scene, the gathering, washing the feet, the discourse.
3. A garden, two companies of men, one man alone praying.
4. A court room, a trial, a judge, accusers, the denial.
5. The crucifixion scene, the soldiers, the mocking crowd, the weeping women.
6. The morning at the tomb.
7. The ascension, the parting words, the gazing disciples, the comforting angels.

A.D. 26. Dec. 5 to Dec. 26.	Nativity. Preparation. A.D. 26. Jan. A.D. 27.	Birth.
		Youth.
		Visit to Jerusalem.
A.D. 27. (Judas.) I. Year of Beginnings.	A.D. 28. (Galilee.) II. Year of Development.	John.
		Baptism.
		Temptation.
		First Disciples.
A.D. 29. (Galilee, Peraea.) III. Year of Working and Teaching.	A.D. 30. (Judas, etc.) Three months.	" Miracle.
		" Reform.
		" Discourse.
		" Tour.
A.D. 29. (Galilee, Peraea.) III. Year of Working and Teaching.	A.D. 30. (Judas, etc.) Three months.	Epochs of training disciples.
		Apostles.
		Principles.
		Opposition.
A.D. 29. (Galilee, Peraea.) III. Year of Working and Teaching.	A.D. 30. (Judas, etc.) Three months.	Parables.
		Miracles illustrating the gospel.
		Bread of life.
		Transfiguration.
A.D. 29. (Galilee, Peraea.) III. Year of Working and Teaching.	A.D. 30. (Judas, etc.) Three months.	Light to the blind.
		Good Samaritan.
		Prodigal Son.
		Raising of Lazarus.
A.D. 29. (Galilee, Peraea.) III. Year of Working and Teaching.	A.D. 30. (Judas, etc.) Three months.	Triumphal entry.
		Lord's Supper.
		Crucifixion.
		Resurrection.
A.D. 29. (Galilee, Peraea.) III. Year of Working and Teaching.	A.D. 30. (Judas, etc.) Three months.	Ascension.

THE LAST FIVE DAYS.

Arranged according to Jewish and Modern reckoning.

Nisan	14th Thursday			15th Friday			16th Jewish Sabbath.			17th Sunday			18th Monday	
	Preparation			Cruc'f'x'n 9 to 3			In the tomb			Resur- rec- tion			First meet- ing of the disci- ples	
	Midnight	Sunrise	Noon	Sunset 6 P. M.	Midnight	Sunrise	Noon	Sunset 6 P. M.	Midnight	Sunrise	Noon	Sunset 6 P. M.	Midnight	
April.														
5th Wednesday	6th Thursday			7th Friday			8th Saturday			9th Sunday			10th Monday	

IV. Object Lesson Review.—A large number of natural objects are connected with the life and teachings of Jesus. These may be written on slips of paper, and distributed to different members of the class, who are to remember where they belong in Christ's life, the story connected with them, and the instruction to be drawn from them. Or it may be a general exercise, and the name of the object be written upon the blackboard, or, when possible, shown to the scholars.

Some of these object lessons are:—

A MANGER.	A RIVER.	A DOVE.
A STAR.	A SERPENT.	A VINE.
GOLD.	WATER.	A HOUSE.
A MOUNTAIN.	BREAD.	A TOMB.
FLOWERS.	SPICES.	A LAKE.
BIRDS.	GRAIN.	A TABLE.
SHEEP.	TREES.	A CROSS.
FISHES.	THORNS.	A CLOUD.

V. Character Review.—Having the chief events in the life of Christ well in mind, we can strive to form a spiritual picture of our Lord in our minds. What are the moral qualities we have seen in his words and works? From which of them did they shine forth, and under what circumstances?

Among these are:—

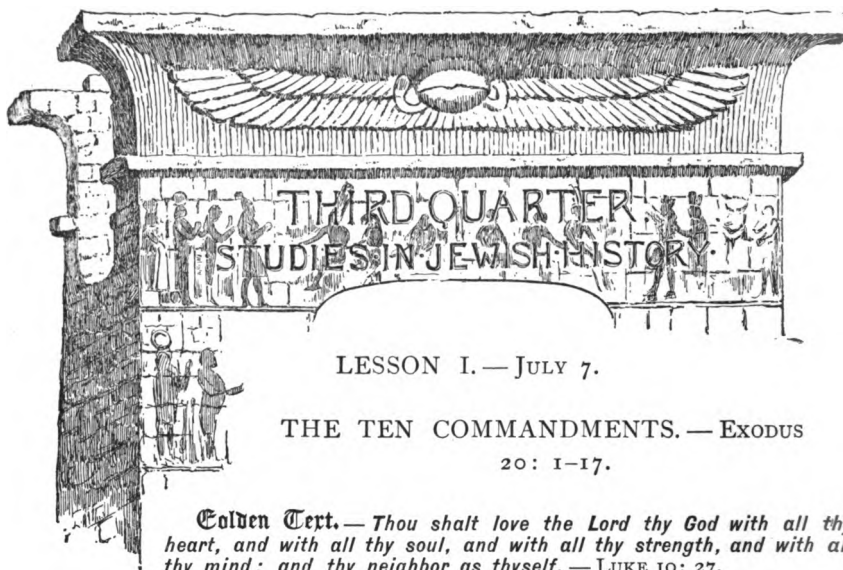
HIS LOVE TO MEN.	HIS FAITHFULNESS.
HIS GRACIOUS ATTRACTIVENESS.	HIS SELF-SACRIFICE.
HIS HATRED OF SIN.	HIS OBEDIENCE.
HIS PATIENCE.	HIS SELF-CONTROL.
HIS WISDOM.	HIS TRUST IN GOD.
HIS PRAYERFULNESS.	HIS HUMILITY.

VI. Pictures for illustration of the lessons, or for an evening stereopticon review.
UNMOUNTED PHOTOGRAPHS.

Entry into Jerusalem.—*Doré*.
Entry into Jerusalem.—*Ploekhorst*.
The Last Supper.—*da Vinci*.
The Last Supper.—*Raphael*.
Washing the Disciples' Feet.—*Bida*.
Garden of Gethsemane.
Christ in the Garden.—*Hofmann*.
Kiss of Judas.—*Ary Scheffer*.
Christ Before Pilate.—*Munkacsy*.
Leaving the Prætorium.—*Doré*.

Bearing the Cross.—*Raphael*.
The Crucifixion.—*Rubens*.
The Crucifixion.—*Tintoretto*.
The Crucifixion.—*Munkacsy*.
The Crucifixion.—*Dürer*.
Descent from the Cross.—*Rubens*.
The Resurrection.—*Naack*.
The Three Marys at the Tomb.—*Ploekhorst*.
Walk to Emmaus.—*Hofmann*.
The Ascension.—*Pacchiarotto*.

STEREOPTICON pictures of most of the above, and many others illustrating this part of the life of Christ.



THE BOOK OF EXODUS.—(1) Exodus is a Greek word, meaning, going out and the book is so named from the Greek translation because its chief theme is the departure of the Israelites from Egypt towards Canaan. (2) It is the second of the Books of Moses commonly called the Pentateuch, or fivefold book. (3) It is written in the Hebrew language. (4) The main records probably date from near the time of the events.

WRITTEN LANGUAGE.—It is shown by abundant evidence from inscription in Babylonia, Egypt, Southern Arabia, and Palestine, "that alphabetical writing and the habit of recording events had existed in the regions occupied by the Israelites and their ancestors for many centuries before the Exodus." (See Sayce's book, below.)

QUESTIONS IN DISCUSSION.—The Sunday-school teacher ordinarily has no time in the short hour of teaching to take up the discussions among scholars about the book and the rest of the Pentateuch, even if he has time to decide for himself what are the results, of a battle as yet far from being decided. Therefore, these discussions will not be entered upon in this volume; but it is well (1) to remember that the chief practical truths are the same, no matter what the result. (2) Most persons must patiently await the final result which will be like the battle of the giants fabled to have sprung from the dragon's teeth sown by Cadmus. They destroyed one another, till at last one great giant remained who aided him in building the city. (3) For those who have time to investigate, books of different views will be named in the *Library References*. New light is continually being thrown upon this history, from many sources. As Longfellow wrote of Agassiz, the great investigator of Nature,—

"Here is a story book
Thy Father hath written for thee,—
Come wander with me, she said,

Into regions yet untrod,
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God."

THE SECTION includes the period from the crossing of the Red Sea to the giving of the Law upon Sinai, Exodus, chapters 16 to 20; and the

PARALLEL REPORT of the Decalogue in Deuteronomy 5: 6-21.

TIME of this lesson, May, B. C. 149. Fifty days after leaving Egypt, according to the common chronology.

PLACE.—The people were encamped in a plain, probably Er Rahah, at the foot of Mount Sinai, which is probably the peak Ras-safsáfah of Jebel Mousa; in the southern part of the Sinaitic peninsula between the northern branches of the Red Sea.

CONNECTION.—We now return, after a year in the beautiful life of Christ, to the earlier portions of the History of Redemption. We left the children of Israel just after their crossing of the Red Sea. We take up their history at the beginning of the training

and discipline by which they became consolidated into a nation, and prepared to take possession of the Promised Land.

THE JOURNEY from the Red Sea to Sinai was about one hundred and fifty miles, and occupied about fifty days (Ex. 19: 1, where the third month is the month of the year, the Exodus having taken place in the latter half of the first month). The chief incidents were:—

1. The encampment by the wells and palm trees of Elim.
2. The giving of the manna, first in the wilderness of Sin.
3. The gift of the water from a rock at Meribah.
4. The battle with the Amalekites, when Aaron and Hur held up the hands of Moses.
5. The organization of the nation by rulers of various grades under Moses.

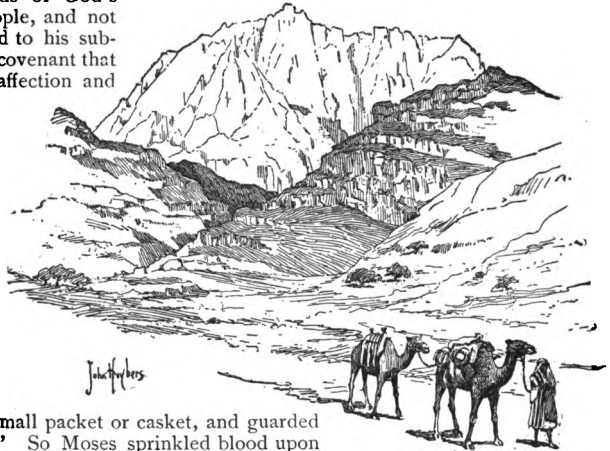
1. And God spake ¹ all these words, saying,

¹ Deut. 5: 22.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Covenant of the Ten Words.—In the Old Testament the Decalogue is never termed the law, or commandments, but *covenant* (R. v. margin of Ex. 34: 28; Deut. 4: 13), or *testimony*, bearing witness to the covenant, or the *ten words* of the covenant.

"They are the simple words of God's loving covenant with his people, and not arbitrary commandings of God to his subjects." They are "a loving covenant that binds two parties in mutual affection and fidelity," "having its statement of promises on the one hand, and responsibilities on the other." "A covenant among the Orientals is, and always has been, a sacred compact binding two parties in loving agreement." In certain cases, "a written compact is signed by each party and given to the other with the stamp of the writer's blood upon it as a part of the ceremony of covenanting; and this writing is carefully encased in a small packet or casket, and guarded by its holder as his very life." So Moses sprinkled blood upon the book of the covenant (Heb. 9: 19), and the stone record of it was enclosed in a casket or ark (Ex. 40: 20).—*H. C. Trumbull.*



Mountains of Sinai.

II. The Impressive Mode of Making the Covenant.—Amid thunders, and lightnings, and thick clouds upon the mountains, which quaked and smoked like a furnace, with "the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud," the words of this covenant were uttered by God (vs. 1, 22). Afterwards they were written by the finger of God on two tables of stone. The size of these tables may be judged from two alabaster slabs, each 9 by 13 inches (written on both sides and containing 570 signs, about the same number as in the Ten Commandments), which have been found in an ark at Balewat, east of Mosul.—*Professor Green.*

The object was to give all the impressive solemnity possible to the covenant, to show its utmost importance, the awful danger in disregarding it; and to make it permanent in the nation as it was eternal in its nature.

"The code from Sinai was a revelation from heaven." "Its completeness and purity are as much above the average insight of 800 B. C. as of 1500 B. C."

III. God's Part of the Covenant.—Vs. 1, 2. 1. And God spake all these words, in three ways: (1) by his voice; (2) by writing them on the tablets of stone; and (3) he has written them on the very nature of man. Still, it is necessary that they should be definitely expressed, because it would have taken ages for man to discover them, if he ever did, and they needed the divine authority behind them to make them effective.

2. ¹ I *am* the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.
 3. ² Thou shalt have ^a no other gods before me.

¹ Lev. 26: 1, 13.

Deut. 5: 6.

Psa. 81: 10.

Hos. 13: 4.

Rev. Ver. *a* none.² Deut. 5: 7; 6: 14.^a Kings 17: 35.

Jer. 25: 6; 35: 15.

2. **I am the Lord.** Jehovah, the everlasting, self-existent, eternal, I am thy God. This everlasting, omnipotent, omnipresent God is their God, who has chosen them, created them, and will care for them. This is God's covenant promise to Israel, "to be their loving, guarding, guiding God for all time to come." He shows this by what he has already done. **Which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt.** All they possessed and all they could hope for were from God. Every good to them as individuals and as a nation was involved in this covenant promise of God. "If ye will keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" (Ex. 19: 5).

IV. **Man's Part of the Covenant.** — "There follow the covenant agreements of God's people as 'the party of the second part' in this loving compact." — *Trumbull*. The promises on God's part cannot be performed except on certain necessary conditions on their part. The ten words express those conditions.

CHARACTERISTICS. (1) They express great principles of true living. They are not Jewish, but divine enactments. (2) They must be distinguished from the civil enactments, which are the application of the principles to varied circumstances as far as it was possible to carry them out in civil law. The principles and the ideal must be perfect. (3) As principles, they are adapted to the training of free men in obedience and love. Civil enactments restrain from injuring others, and guide by definite laws till righteousness becomes a habit and an inward law. (4) They are eternal. They can never be outgrown. Saints and angels live in accordance with them in heaven. They can never be repealed unless the very nature of God and of creation should change.

THEIR PENALTY. No definite penalty is attached; but disobedience to them, since they are a part of the covenant, is to forfeit the fulfilment of God's part, and that is the worst possible penalty.

THEIR SUM, as given by Christ in Matthew 22: 37-40, quoted from Deuteronomy 6: 5; 10: 12; Leviticus 19: 18, is love to God with all the heart, and love of our neighbor as ourselves. These precepts are not only the sum, but the fountain whence obedience to all the commandments flows.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT (v. 3).

I. **The Covenant Duty.** — 3. **Thou**, in the singular, for each individual must obey for himself. **Shalt have no other gods before me**, in my presence, in addition to me. I alone must be your God. "A divided heart is no heart at all."

II. **The Reasons** are (1) that there really is no other true God. (2) The accepting him is absolutely essential to a covenant agreement with him. (3) His nature is worthy of supreme love, and awakens it in the heart. (4) We become like the God we love. To love him is the foundation of true religion and morality. (5) He is able to help, and guard, and bless his children under all circumstances.

"I know not where his islands lift
 Their fronded palms in air;

I only know I cannot drift
 Beyond his love and care."

III. **Modern Applications.** — Every person must have some God. We all have a tendency to what Carlyle calls hero-worship; we must look up to some one greater and better than we. The test as to who or what is our God is the *supreme affection and choice of our souls*, that for which we are most ready to make sacrifices. That is the Ithuriel's spear that tests our moral natures. Whatever we love most and choose as first is our God. It may be ourselves, or money, or pleasure, or honor, or it may be our Heavenly Father. The First Commandment "blesses us by showing us that we may cherish supreme affection, worship, trust, self-surrender, aspiration towards one God." — *Maclaren*.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT (vs. 4-6).

I. **The Covenant Duty.** — Here we are forbidden to worship God in false and unworthy ways.

4. ¹ Thou shalt not make unto thee ^b any graven image, ^c or any likeness of *anything* that *is* in heaven above, or that *is* in the earth beneath, or that *is* in the water under the earth :

5. ² Thou shalt not bow down thyself ^d to them, nor serve them : for I the Lord thy God *am* a ³ jealous God, ⁴ visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children ^e unto the third and fourth *generation* of them that hate me ;

6. And ⁵ showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.

¹ Lev. 26: 1. Deut. 4: 16; 5: 8; 27: 15. Psa. 97: 7. Rev. Ver. ⁶ a. ^c nor the likeness of
² Ex. 23: 24. Josh. 23: 7. 2 Kings 17: 35. Isa. 44: 15, 19. ^d unto. any form.
³ Deut. 4: 24; 6: 15. Josh. 24: 19. Nah. 1: 2. ^e upon the third and upon the
⁴ Lev. 20: 5; 26: 39, 40. Num. 14: 18, 33. 1 Kings 21: 29. fourth generation.
⁵ Job. 5: 4. Psa. 79: 8. ⁵ Deut. 7: 9. Psa. 89: 3, 4. Rom. 11: 28.

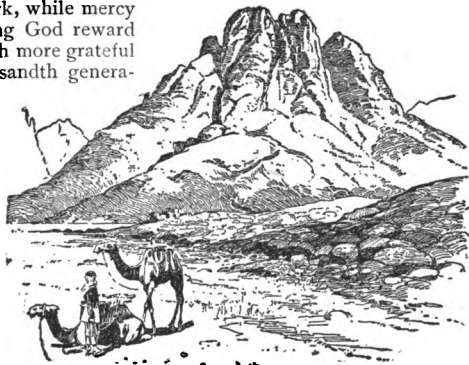
4. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, etc., as a representative of God, as a means of worshipping God. In the Parliament of Religions, the greatest representative from India declared that the material images were to call up the mental idea of God, of purity, truth, omnipresence; "idols are the supports of his spiritual childhood." All this is absolutely forbidden by this commandment.

II. The Reasons. — (1) Because all images misrepresent God. They are not like God, nor can they be. They are in no wise "like pictures of a friend." "Anything coming between man's spirit and God the Spirit, is a hindrance to worship, and not a help to it." — *Trumbull*. (2) Blessing or cursing depend on obeying or disobeying this command. And this is stated because the effects are not so visible and immediate as those of wrongs against our fellow-men.

5. I . . . am a jealous God, *i. e.*, not willing that any other should be regarded as his equal, or take his place in the affections and worship of his people. Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children. The visitation here spoken of can hardly be any other than that which we are accustomed to witness in the common experience of life (Ex. 34: 7; Jer. 32: 18). It is a statement of the scientific doctrine of heredity, a corner-stone of evolution. Sons and remote descendants inherit the consequences of their fathers' sins in disease, poverty, captivity, with all the influences of bad example and evil communications. But such suffering must always be free from the sting of conscience; it is not like the visitation for sin on the individual by whom the sin has been committed. — *S. Clarke*. Nor does it imply that the punishment of personal iniquities of parents is inflicted on children (Ezek. 18: 20). Unto the third and fourth generation. The sins of the fathers are visited upon more than the first generation; but there is a limit, and recovery is possible in time. Of them that hate me. And show their hatred by disobedience.

6. Showing mercy, favor, kindness to the guilty. Unto thousands of generations. See margin of R. V., also Deuteronomy 7: 9; Psalms 105: 8. Judgment is God's strange work, while mercy is his delight. So richly does the loving God reward his dutiful and trustful children. So much more grateful to his heart it is to bless, even to the thousandth generation, than to visit iniquity, even so far as to the third and fourth. — *Cowles*. Of them that love me and who prove it by keeping my commandments. "What a superb illustration of this the story of Abraham and his posterity is." — *Boardman's University Sermons on the Ten Commandments*.

MODERN APPLICATIONS. This command requires a spiritual worship, "in spirit and in truth." I am not allowed to frame, even in my mind, any image or conception of God as possessing form. — *Boyd on the Shorter Catechism*. "The attempt to make of the senses a



Place of the Assembling.

7. ¹ Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD ² will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

8. ³ Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.

9. ⁴ Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work:

10. But the ⁵ seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: *in it* thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maid-servant, nor thy cattle, nor ⁶ thy stranger that is within thy gates;

¹ Lev. 19: 12. Deut. 5: 11. Psal. 15: 4.
Matt. 5: 33.

² Mic. 6: 11.

³ Lev. 19: 3, 30; 26: 2. Deut. 5: 12.
⁴ Ex. 23: 12; 31: 15; 34: 21. Lev.
23: 3. Ezek. 20: 12. Luke 13: 14.

⁵ Gen. 2: 2, 3.
⁶ Neh. 13: 16-19.

ladder for the soul to climb to God by is a great deal more likely to end in the soul's going down the ladder than up it." — *Maclaren*. The only really "barren worship" is that which is barren of spiritual life and fervor.

THIRD COMMANDMENT (v. 7).

I. **The Covenant Duty.** — 7. **Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;** *i. e.*, lightly, carelessly, thoughtlessly. "There shall be no insincerity on the part of God's covenant people in their claiming and bearing his name." "Coming into the privileges of his name was the coming into the responsibilities of that name." "It was as though Mr. Moody were taking a little street waif into his home to train the boy as his own son, and were formally giving to that boy the right to take and bear his name. Naturally he might say: 'Understand, now, my boy, that, wherever you go, they'll say, "There goes a young Moody." Now, I value my name, and I don't want it disgraced. See to it that you take care of that name wherever you are.' " — *Trumbull*.

II. **The Reasons.** — **The Lord will not hold him guiltless.** He has broken the covenant, and must suffer the consequences. For this sin practically takes away God. Men always lose faith in that which they take lightly on their tongues. This is the deadly nature of profanity. Because to take God's name in vain is to raise up an army of doubts. There is no way in which you can make God seem a myth, an unreality, and destroy his power over men more easily than by taking his name lightly on the lips.

"Profanity is the tribute which the servants of Satan pay to their master in token of their allegiance, as the tenants of a Scotch landholder pay him a pepper-corn annually in token of submission." It is the most useless and ill-paid of sins. For all other sins Satan baits his hook with some pleasure or reward, but he catches the profane swearer with the bare hook.

III. **Modern Applications.** — This commandment forbids perjury and the breaking of all promises made in the name of God. It does not forbid judicial oaths, which are not the taking of God's name in vain. It forbids (1) all careless, trifling use of God's name. Men excuse themselves for swearing, by saying that they did not mean anything; but that is the very sin forbidden here. (2) It forbids all irreverent use of the Bible, hymns, sacred things; all joking and punning upon them, or connecting funny stories with them. (3) It forbids all irreverence, thoughtless laughing and talking in the house of God. (4) It forbids all empty forms of religion, without its spirit. (5) It forbids all that large class of by-words which may be called *substitutionary oaths*. They are the devil's drillground for profanity, and recruiting office for the army of profane swearers.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT (vs. 8-11).

I. **The Covenant Duty.** — 8. **Remember**, implying that the Sabbath was an old institution, as old as man himself. **The sabbath day**, the rest day, **to keep it holy**, set apart as sacred to the worship of God. It must not merely be a rest day, but a worship day. "Unless a man worships God at stated times, he is not likely to worship him at all. So it is that God makes it a part of his loving covenant between himself and his people, that ever and always they shall worship him steadily, as well as worship him sincerely, spiritually, and solely; because without this stated recognition of the covenant, the covenant itself would be forgotten." — *Trumbull*.

9. **Six days shalt thou labor.** Labor is a duty as well as a necessity. It is essential to the well-being of man. But it is not good to labor all the time. **All thy work** must be included within six days.

10. **But the seventh day.** Every seventh day, but the point from which to count is

11. For ¹ in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

12. ² Honor thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.

¹ Gen. 2: 2.² Ex. 23: 26. Lev. 19: 3.

Deut. 5: 16. Jer. 35: 7.

Matt. 15: 4; 19: 19. Mark

7: 10. Luke 18: 20. Eph. 6: 2.

not given. **The sabbath of the Lord.** The rest day devoted to God. Only a religious Sabbath, which belongs to God, can be retained among men as a day of *rest*. **Thou shalt not do any work,** at your usual business, for worldly ends. "Works of necessity and mercy" are not really work. **Nor thy son . . . nor thy man-servant.** You shall not rest at their expense, nor take away their rights to rest. **Nor thy cattle.** They need the rest, and if they work man must work, too. **Nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.** Those who come to live in your village or city. Gates are those of the town, not the doors of the house or yard. If heathen come to live in your cities, they must conform to the Sabbath laws; for if strangers can do business on the Sabbath, they will soon lead others to do it.

II. **The Reasons.** — **FIRST.** It belongs to the original constitution of things. 11. **For in six days.** Divine days, doubtless long periods. **And rested the seventh day.** From creating; but if, as is doubtless true, we are now living in God's Sabbath rest, he is caring for the needs of men to preserve them, and for their moral and religious natures, thus showing us what he means by this commandment to us. Thus the Sabbath day was made not for a race, but for man.

SECOND. **Wherefore the Lord blessed the seventh day.** It is crowded full to overflowing with blessings to man. **And hallowed it.** Made it holy, hedged it in from worldly labors. (1) Man's body needs the rest. (2) Man needs it to care for his spiritual nature, to prepare for immortal life. (3) Man needs it as a day for moral training and instruction, for looking at life from a moral standpoint. (4) It is of great value as a means of improving the mind. The study of the highest themes, the social discussion of them in the Sabbath school, the instruction from the pulpit, the expression of religious truth in the prayer-meeting give an ordinary person more mental training in the course of his life than all his schooldays give. (5) The religious Sabbath is a blessing by relieving the mind from worry and care, which kill more people than hard labor does. It gives a change to the thoughts, and thus brings rest. (6) The Sabbath law is of the greatest benefit to the people in warding off oppression. The only barrier that can keep the world out of the Sabbath, that can preserve it to the working people as a day of rest, is God's command to keep it sacred to him. "When Sunday becomes a day of pleasure, it ceases to be a day of rest."

III. **The Christian Sabbath.** — The Sabbath is not a Jewish institution, but was ordained for man, and is written in the very nature of man. Therefore, it has never been abrogated. Christ removed the rubbish that clung to it, as Plato says the seaweeds clung to the marine Gaucus, disfiguring him as a man. But he never abrogated the Sabbath. It would be a very strange thing if God should annul from the Decalogue a law he has written in the very nature of men, and which is as old as mankind. Moreover, Sunday is as really the seventh day as the Jewish Saturday-Sabbath. There is nothing in the law that tells us from what day to count.

FIFTH COMMANDMENT (v. 12).

This is a connecting link between the two tables of the law, and belongs to both.

I. **The Covenant Duty.** — 12. **Honor,** in heart and in life. This is far more than merely to obey. It is to treat with reverence and affection, "because they are, within the scope of their rule, the representatives of God." **Thy father and thy mother.** Both are equally included. "By Oriental custom, the terms 'father' and 'mother' are by no means limited to one's natural parents, but are applicable to superiors in years, or in wisdom, or in civil or religious station." "It is not merely that the terms 'father' and 'mother' may include others besides human parents, but it is that no Oriental would think of limiting those terms to that relationship. Honor those who are over you in the Lord, as the representatives of the Lord. He who fails to honor them lacks in due honor to him who has deputed them to speak and act for himself." — *Trumbull*.

13. ¹ Thou shalt ² not kill.

14. ² Thou shalt not commit adultery.

¹ Deut. 5: 17. Matt. 5: 21. Rom. 13: 9.

² Deut. 5: 18. Matt. 5: 27.

Rev. Ver.: /do no murder.

II. The Promise.—That thy days may be long upon the land. (1) The nation shall be permanent in the promised land; (2) the individual life shall be long, implying happiness, peace, and prosperity. "Confucianism bases all morality upon parental and filial relations." And it may be this that has given such permanence to the Chinese nation. Disobedience to parents quickly leads to disobedience to the laws of God and of country, which, more than all other things, shortens the life, and destroys its prosperity. It was stated, at a meeting of the American Prison Discipline Association, as the result of inquiries into the history of criminals in the prisons of the United States, that in almost all cases their course of ruin began with disobedience to parents. And there is scarcely a sin that receives its retribution with more certainty than that of failing to honor father and mother.

SIXTH COMMANDMENT (v. 13).

I. The Covenant Duty.—13. **Thou shalt not kill**, that is, as in R. v., "do no murder." "Here is a call of God to guard sacredly the life of every child of God, as that which is dear to God."—*Trumbull*. The legal punishment of murderers is for this very purpose, to make sacred and preserve the life of God's children. Our own life should be sacred, and we are to do nothing that will shorten or destroy it, as the means God has given us by which to serve him and bless our fellow-men. Dissipation, drunkenness, neglect of due care break this command. Physicians tell us that half the deaths from disease are preventable, and are therefore practically suicides or murders. At the same time we are to remember that to every man worthy of living, there are some things worth more than life. It is better to die than to do wrong; it is better to die than not to do our duty in saving others. Hence, martyrs and moral heroes do not break this command.

II. The Spirit of the Law has been shown by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, and repeated by the Apostle John (1 John 3: 15). The wrong is in the heart, and he that cherishes the spirit that leads to murder has really, so far as himself is concerned, committed murder.

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT (v. 14).

I. The Covenant Duty.—14. **Thou shalt not commit adultery.** Which is the destruction of the family, an institution dear to God, and which is necessary to the building up of his kingdom, and to the welfare of God's children. It is said that "the star of Bethlehem for temperance stands over the schoolhouse." But the star of Bethlehem for morality and religion stands over the home. This commandment is the wall around the family, the city of true love, with its homes, its children, its heavenly life of love,—the type of the city of God. This wall defends the home against the demons of selfishness, the dragons of sensual love and divorce, the storms of vile literature, the armies of evil thoughts and bad companions. This commandment is also a wall to keep men from entering another city, the city of *False Pleasure*. It is the city of destruction, from which Bunyan's pilgrim fled. In its center is a burning whirlwind of flame, filled with diseases, remorse, and death. This vortex of fiery evils is hidden from the sight of those without by being surrounded with palaces of sensual delight, magnificent temples of lust, brilliant saloons of intoxicating drinks, conversation halls of lewd stories, libraries of obscene literature, debasing theatres, obscene pictures.

II. The Spirit of the Law is interpreted by Christ in the Sermon on the Mount as forbidding the spirit which would express itself in the open breaking of this command. It forbids those things which cherish this spirit. (1) All evil, sensual thoughts. (2) Theatres, which arouse sensual feelings, and bring into low company. (3) Dancing, except under this simple rule, that no liberties with the person should be allowed in dancing which are not perfectly proper in general company in the presence of parents. No one is safe that allows for a moment anything more. (4) Looking at obscene pictures which are exposed for sale at most news-stands. (5) Impure reading, which, like the Pied Piper of Hamelin, is drawing away our children from purity to be lost in the mazes of evil. (6) Lewd stories and jokes. (7) The making, printing, selling any of these debasing things.

15. ¹ Thou shalt not steal.

16. ² Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

¹ Lev. 19: 11. Deut. 5: 19. Matt. 19: 18. Rom. 13: 9.

² Deut. 5: 20. Matt. 19: 18.

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT (v. 15).

I. The Covenant Duty.—15. Thou shalt not steal. "The rights of property are of divine appointment, and you are to refrain from claiming as your own that which now belongs to another."—*Trumbull*. Only thus can God's kingdom prosper, and the best good of all men be attained. To gain by stealing is far worse for the thief than for the one wronged. A clear conscience is worth more than all the world. Plato illustrates the test of honesty by the story of Gyges' ring, which made the wearer invisible. He that is honest, even when he can be dishonest without being found out, is a truly honest man.

II. Modern Applications.—This commandment is broken (1) by taking what does not belong to us; (2) by taking advantage of others' ignorance to defraud them; (3) by false returns to the assessors of taxes, by trying to escape custom-house duties; (4) by putting false labels and false measures to goods made and sold; (5) by giving too small wages to those we employ; (6) by not earning the wages we receive and as we agree; (7) by beating down those that sell, so as not to give a fair profit on the goods we buy; (8) by charging exorbitant prices; (9) by gambling, raffling at fairs, taking shares in lotteries; (10) by all business which injures the life and property of others, as selling intoxicating liquors, obscene picture-papers, etc., or renting buildings for their sale; (11) obtaining the advantage of libraries, churches, papers, without doing our part toward their support, in so far as we are able.

NINTH COMMANDMENT (v. 16).

I. The Covenant Duty.—16. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. "This is a summons to hold in sacred regard the personal reputation or good name of every child of God." "A child's good name is always dear to his father. He who loves and honors the father will not be heedless of the reputation of the child."—*Trumbull*.

"Who steals my purse steals trash,
But he who filches from me my good
name

Robs me of that which not enriches him,
Yet leaves me poor indeed."

Truthfulness is the only condition on which human intercourse is possible, and it lies at the foundation of all personal character. No matter how bad a man is, there is room for hope with respect to him if he is essentially truthful and honest; but if he is a liar, if truth and error are confounded in his own mind and character, there is nothing to build upon.

II. Things Forbidden.—The worst form of lying stated in the commandment includes all other forms. This commandment is broken (1) by slanderers, and by those who listen to their slanders. These speak evil of their neighbors when they do not *know* that the evil is true, and also when it is not necessary that the evil be told. (2) By those who insinuate evil against others. (3) Hypocrites, who try to appear what they are not, like the veiled prophet of Khorassan in "Lalla Rookh." (4) Those who act lies, put lying labels on their goods, put the best things on the top of the basket or barrel. (5) Those who are careless about speaking the truth. (6) Gossips who retail scandal, who report only the bad, and not the good, about persons. It has been said, that if every person had a trumpet like the one in Hood's "Tale of a Trumpet," by which people heard not the words, but the thoughts of others, there would be few friends left in the world. (7) Those who misrepresent other people, churches, sects, or parties, whether intentionally or carelessly, not having taken all the pains possible to learn the truth. (8) Those who impute false and unworthy motives to others. (9) Those who put false names to things; bad names on good things, or good names on bad things: as calling strict Christians, puritanical; uprightness, stiffness; virtue, prudishness; or, calling dishonesties, business transactions; slanders, the blunt telling the truth; impoliteness, open-heartedness; carousing, pleasure.

17. ¹ Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, ² thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that *is* thy neighbor's.

¹ Deut. 5: 21. Mic. 2: 2. Hab. 2: 9. Luke 12: 15. Acts 20: 33. Rom. 7: 7. Eph. 5: 3, 5.

² Job 31: 9. Prov. 6: 29. Jer. 5: 8. Matt. 5: 28.

TENTH COMMANDMENT (v. 17).

The Covenant Duty.—17. **Thou shalt not covet.** This is the only one of the commandments which treats solely of sins of the mind and heart; and in so doing it strikes at the very root of all sin, for every sin is born of desire (Mark 7: 21, 22; Jas. 1: 14, 15), and there would be no sin if this commandment were perfectly kept (Rom. 7: 7). — *Todd.* Thou shalt not only not do the evils forbidden, but thou shalt not want to do them. (1) Covetousness is not a mere desire for more; for that desire, in some form, is ever appealed to in the Bible, and is the root of all civilization and progress. (2) Covetousness is the over-strong desire for more, uncontrolled by reason, or conscience, or the word of God, — a desire that is willing to gain for itself (*a*) at the expense of others, (*b*) at the expense of higher and better things. It is not coveting to desire a house, but to desire it so as to deprive our neighbor of it, or to gain it by wrong-doing or neglect of duty. All true gains, all true increase are such as benefit both parties and the community in general.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

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On the Ten Commandments, a very choice little book is Dr. Trumbull's *The Ten Commandments as a Covenant of Love* (1892, 25 cts., Wattles & Co.). Boardman's *University Lectures on the Ten Commandments* (1889, Baptist Publishing Society) is very suggestive. Dyke's *The Law of the Ten Words*; R. W. Dale's *The Ten Commandments*, and Dr. Dunning's *Making of the Bible*, Chap. II.

LESSON II. — JULY 14.

THE GOLDEN CALF. — EXODUS 32: 1-8, 30-35.

Golden Text.—*Little children, keep yourselves from idols.* — I JOHN 5: 21.

THE SECTION.—The rest of the book of Exodus should be read. But especially the "Book of the Covenant," chapters 20-23 and chapter 32; and the

PARALLEL ACCOUNT in Deuteronomy 9: 11-21.

TIME. Sometime in July, B. C. 1491 (according to the common chronology), toward the close of Moses' forty days on Mount Sinai; six or seven weeks after the giving of the Law.

PLACE.—The people are still encamped before Mount S'īnāi in the Valley of Er-Rāhāh.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Er-Rāhāh; S'īnāi or S'īnāi (S'īnā).

REVIEW.—As soon as could be after the Israelites had been delivered from their bondage in Egypt, steps were taken to form them into a nation, and to train them to become worthy citizens of the kingdom of God. One of the first and greatest means for these ends was the giving to them the Moral Law from Sinai, and making this a condition on their part of a covenant between them and God, as related in our last lesson.

1. And when the people saw that Moses ¹ delayed to come down ^a out of the mount, the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, ² Up, make us gods, which shall ³ go before us; for *as for* this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we ^b wot not what is become of him.

¹ Ex. 24: 18. Deut. 9: 9.² Acts 7: 40.³ Ex. 13: 21.Rev. Ver.: *a* from.*b* know.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Book of the Covenant.—This is the name given (from Ex. 24: 7) to chapters 20 to 23, containing the covenant of the Ten Commandments, and about seventy enactments based upon them, which apply their principles to the lives of the people. These were given to Moses on Mount Sinai, for the government of the people.

II. Ratification of the Covenant.—Chap. 24: 3-8. No government can succeed in training the people without their practical consent. Accordingly, the words of the covenant were written in a book, an altar was built, the people assembled, sacrifices were offered, expressing gratitude, consecration, and atonement for sin; the book of the covenant was read before the people. They make a solemn promise to obey. The blood of the sacrifice is sprinkled upon the altar, upon the book (Heb. 9: 19, 20), and upon the people, as the most solemn ratification of the covenant possible, in one form of the Oriental blood covenant. (See Trumbull's *The Blood Covenant*.)

THE BLOOD COVENANT. (1) The blood was regarded as the very life, the inner personality. (2) It was therefore the most precious thing one could give another. (3) It was regarded as a means of infusing life into another by infusing the blood of a healthy person into one who was sick. Modern science shows that this was not without foundation. (4) The mutual transfusion of blood from one person to another by tasting each other's blood made them blood relations of the most intimate kind. They were one evermore. (5) The blood of sacrifices was regarded as a substitute for their own blood. (6) Henceforth the parties were to keep their covenant as their very life.

III. Moses' Absence for Forty Days in the Mount.—Chap. 24: 9-18. After this Moses was called up into the mount, in order to receive the tables of stone, and further instructions; and also to be prepared by his intimate communion with God for his long and difficult work of forming the people into a nation that could dwell in the promised land. Every quality of mind and of spirit was to be taxed to the utmost. Every minister, every teacher, every believer needs "periods of solitude and communing with God; away from the fray, the battle, the race, but receiving nourishment, nutriment, inspiration, comfort, and even words by which to express the divine thought. And, coming back from the mountain of contemplation, he touches life with a steadier hand, and does his duty with a completer obedience and more radiant cheerfulness." — *Parker*.

*Communion with
God.*

IV. The Discouraged People.—V. 1. The absence of Moses was also a time of testing both the leaders and the people. They had just taken the oath of allegiance to God, and unanimously promised to obey him. But they were inexperienced. They had not acquired habits of intelligent and uniform obedience, their faith was unstrengthened by trial, and their old wayward impulses and habits were awed but not destroyed. These weeks were their time of trial, of growth, of progress, of development. As Phillips Brooks has well said: "There was no danger that came to the Christian church, as there was no danger that came to the Christian man, that was not capable also of being considered as a chance, an *opportunity* of larger work and of developed life."

*Trials are Oppor-
tunities.*

1. Saw that Moses delayed. He was gone forty days (24: 18), almost seven weeks, if the week with the leaders in the lower parts of the mountain is to be added (24: 9, 16). The people gathered themselves together, for something must be done. To Aaron, Moses' brother, and the chief leader left in charge during Moses' absence (24: 14). **Up, and make us gods, or a God, which shall go before us, and be our leader.** They could not see God, and they wanted some visible manifestation of God. They had several manifestations of God, the pillar of cloud and fire, the glory on the mountain, and the daily manna, but even these became so common that they did not make them realize the presence of God. They had just come from the land of

2. And Aaron said unto them, Break off the ¹ golden earrings, which *are* in the ears of your wives, of your sons, and of your daughters, and bring *them* unto me.

3. And all the people brake off the golden earrings which *were* in their ears, and brought *them* unto Aaron.

4. ² And he received *c them* at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, ^d after he had made it a molten calf: and they said, These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

¹ Judg. 8: 24-27.

² Ex. 20: 23.

Judg. 17: 3, 4.

Neh. 9: 18, Psa.

Rev. Ver.: c it.

d and made.

106: 19. Acts 7: 41.



Earrings (Egyptian).

idols, where the heathen gods were everywhere visible. For this Moses, . . . we wot (know) not what is become of him. He may have perished in the flaming summit of the mountain. They had known him but a very short time, and now he had left them in the very heart of the wilderness, far from the promised land, like sheep without a shepherd. Enemies might arise at any time and cut them off, as they had already been attacked by the Amalekites (17: 8-13). Note how contemptuously they spoke of Moses, but it was while he was absent.

V. The Golden Calf. — Vs. 2-4. 2. Break off the golden earrings, which they had begged from the Egyptians on their departure. The Egyptian rings, as seen on the monuments, were round, massy plates of metal; in the ears of your wives, etc. It cost them something to do wrong. And some think that Aaron proposed this plan in the hopes that the wives and daughters would resist, and the people refuse to give. He would thus escape from his dilemma, of either opposing the people, or helping them to break God's law; or at least he could put the people off till Moses returned. But people are not guided by such halfway

measures. Your sons. "Earrings are worn in the East almost as much by men as by women. Most Assyrian and some Egyptian monarchs are represented with them." — Rawlinson.

3. And the people brake off the golden earrings. This shows how discouraged and disappointed the people were.

4. Fashioned it with a graving tool. Either, as several translate, "bound it (the gold) in a bag," or it means "he framed with a graving-tool the image to be made, and, having poured the liquid gold into the mould, he made it a molten calf." — *J. F. and B.* The image was either hollow, or was a wooden or bronze image covered with molten plates of gold. The choice of a calf for the form of the image arose either from the sacred bulls worshipped in Egypt, or more probably from the bull worship in their Ancestral Chaldea. In Chaldea, the bull, generally winged and human-headed, represented the combination of wisdom, strength, and omnipresence, which characterizes divinity: and this combination might well have seemed to carnal minds no unapt symbol of Jehovah. — *Rawlinson.* Champollion observes that the only painting of the bull Mnevis (at Heliopolis, near their Goshen home) yet discovered is colored, *bright yellow*, evidently with the intention of representing a *golden image*.

The artists of the French Institute at Cairo have a representation of an ancient Egyptian calf-idol. It is recumbent, with human eyes, the skin flesh colored, and the whole after parts covered with a white and sky-blue diapered drapery. — *McClintock and Strong.*

IDOLS OF THE HEART. Have we made any calves? Ah, many. We have been great at idol-making. Can I count the calves we have worshipped? the unholy catalogue: Pride, Fashion, Gluttony, Self-Indulgence, Wealth, Station, Influence, Appearances, — all calves of our making, calves of gold. — *Joseph Parker.* Whatever we make first in our heart's love, that is our God. That to which we sacrifice precious things is our God. Whosoever gives up God's commandments, or right, or honor, or truth, or character, or usefulness, for the sake of any gain or of attaining any end, is an idolater.

5. And when Aaron saw ^eit, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made ¹ proclamation, and said, To morrow ^fis a feast to the LORD.

6. And they rose up early on the morrow, and offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the ²people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

7. And the Lord ^gsaid unto Moses, ³Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have ⁴corrupted *themselves* :

^{1,2} Kings 10: 20. 2 Chron. 30: 5.
^{2,1} Cor. 10: 7.

³ Deut. 9: 12.
⁴ Gen. 6: 11, 12. Judg. 2: 19. Hos. 9: 9.

Rev. Ver.: *e* this. *f* shall be.
g spake.

VI. The Covenant Broken.—Vs. 4-6. These be thy gods, O Israel. They did not deny Jehovah, but made a representation of him, contrary to the express command they had promised to obey, and the solemn covenant they had made with God.

5. And when Aaron saw it, how the people regarded the image. To-morrow is a feast to the Lord, who was represented by the image. Aaron would lead the people to worship the true God through an idol.

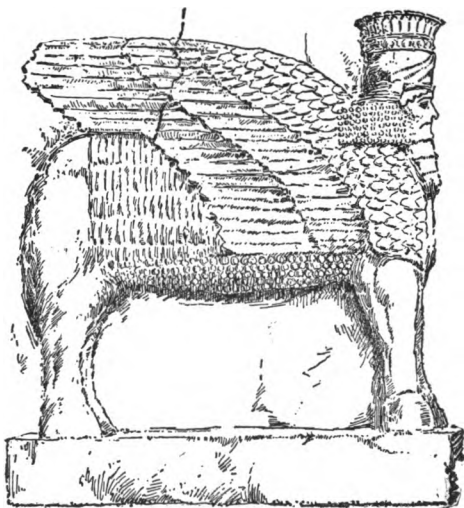
And offered burnt offerings, those wholly consumed, and peace offerings, part of which was burnt, part given to the priests, and the rest was used for a feast by the offerers. Sat down to eat and drink. It was, as usual, a feast. And rose up (from the feast) to play, "implying not only such sports as singing, dancing, and merry-making in general, but in some cases also a species of conduct which the epithet *wanton* as correctly defines as any term which we deem it proper to employ."—*Bush*. "The play included dancing of an indecent kind (vs. 19, 25)."—*Rawlinson*. (See Herodotus 2: 60; 3: 27.)

THE ATTRACTIVE OF IDOLATRY. It has often seemed strange that the Israelites at this time, and for so many generations after, were so easily led into idolatry. (1) In the first place, they longed for some visible representation of God which would appeal to their senses, while Jehovah was unseen. (2) The great and powerful nations around them were idolaters. Idols seemed to have power to build up their greatness. Idolatry was fashionable, and in favor with learning, wealth, and power. (3) But perhaps the chief attraction consisted in the sports, the revelry, the licentious freedom, appealing to every passion, with which idols were worshipped. In the revels of idolaters there was no restraint, no confession of sin, no costly sacrifices, except to passion, but they could serve every evil in the name and under the sanction of their gods; while, on the other hand, the worship of Jehovah was in perfect contrast. It was spiritual, moral, and pure; it restrained all sin; it required the confession and forsaking of wrong; it appealed to the higher nature.

THE SIN. (1) They broke their covenant with God. (2) They practically took away the true God from among the people. For an idol, though it be the most beautiful that art can produce, misrepresents God's very nature. It is no true picture nor symbol of God, who is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit and in truth. (3) They sinned against great light shining from all God had been doing for them within the year. (4) They sinned against great love shown them in wonderful ways. (5) They sinned against their own souls, for they were in a vast wilderness, homeless, without a guide or protector, except one whose covenant care they had rejected.

VII. Moses Came down from the Mount to restore the people to their allegiance.—Vs. 7, 8, and 19-24. All this defection occurred while Moses was with God, receiving the instruction necessary for the people, and God was writing the *ten words* of the covenant upon tables of stone.

7. And the Lord said, for Moses



Winged Bull (Assyrian).

8. They have turned aside quickly out of the way which ¹ I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed ^h thereunto, and said, ² These *be* thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

¹ Ex. 20: 3, 4, 23. Deut. 9: 16.

² 1 Kings 12: 28.

Rev. Ver.: *h* unto it.



Hill of the Golden Calf.

was, of course, wholly ignorant of what was going on below. **Have corrupted themselves**, as a body becomes corrupt which has lost its soul. For this the Lord threatened to destroy them all, and to make of Moses a great nation, as many "as the stars of heaven." Then the nobleness of Moses shone forth in complete self-forgetfulness in his love of God and of the people, while he pleaded for their forgiveness. Moses' character showed that he had been with God. God answered this prayer of Moses, and sent Moses down to save the people. In his hands he carried the two tables of the testimony engraven by the hand of God.

FIRST. When he saw the people in their mad worship of the golden calf, Moses was so amazed with indignation that he threw down the tablets of stone and broke them upon the rocks at the base of Sinai. It was **Breaking the Tablets of Stone**. the people, as in a mirror, how they had broken the precious law

and covenant of God, and could no longer claim his protection.

SECOND. His next measure was to completely destroy the idol by burning it with fire, and reducing it to powder. "The powder of malleable metals can be ground so fine as to resemble dust from the wings of a moth or butterfly; and these dust particles will float in water for hours, and in a running stream for **Destruction of the Idol**."—*Famieson*. (See *Illustrations*.) He then strewed the powder upon the water of the stream from which they drank, and, as they had no other water for their daily use than that of the brook which descended out of the mount (Ex. 17: 6; Deut. 9: 21), they were compelled to drink the water filled with the idol dust.

OBJECT OF THIS TREATMENT. (1) Moses demonstrates to the people the utter weakness and vanity of idols. They could not resist a single man, much less Jehovah. One man could grind the idol to powder. (2) They were compelled not only to see this, but to test it by their own experience. They were compelled "to swallow their god," and if he had any power at all he would revenge himself on them by bringing sickness and pain. (3) They were taught also in a most impressive manner that "the backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways," and that they must "eat the fruit of their own doings." (4) The powder mixed with their drink "signified to them that the curse they had thereby brought upon themselves would mingle itself with all their enjoyments, and embitter them."—*Henry*. **Drinking the Idol Dust**.

THE THIRD measure was to destroy the worst of the offenders who were corrupting the nation. Moses summoned those who were on the Lord's side to come to him, and take active measures to put an end to this revolt. They took their swords and slew three thousand men, probably the ring-leaders and the turbulent, "fresh from their orgies, in a state of licentious attire, whom even Moses' appearance and words had not yet sobered into quietness, shame, and repentance. These, as we understand it, still thronged the open roadway of the camp, which so lately had resounded with their voices; while the vast multitude had retired to the quietness of their tents in tardy repentance and fear."—*Edersheim*. (The word *naked* in verse 25 means "broken loose" from restraint, unruly, licentious.) **Destruction of the Ring-Leaders**.

30. And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye ¹ have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the LORD; peradventure I shall make ¹ an ² atonement for your sin.

31. And Moses returned ³ unto the LORD, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them ⁴ gods of gold.

32. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, ⁵ blot me, I pray thee, out of thy ⁶ book which thou hast written.

33. And the LORD said unto Moses, ⁷ Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

34. ¹ Therefore now go, lead the people unto *the place* of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, ⁸ mine angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, ⁹ in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.

35. And the LORD ¹⁰ plagued the people, because ¹⁰ they made the calf, which Aaron made.

¹ 1 Sam. 12: 20, 23. ⁵ Psa. 69: 28. Rom. 9: 3. ⁹ Deut. 32: 35. Amos 3: Rev. Ver.: *i omit an.*
 Luke 15: 18. ¹⁴ Rom. 2: 5, 6. *f and now go.*
² Num. 25: 13. ¹ Phil. 4: 3. Rev. 3: 5. ¹⁰ 2 Sam. 12: 9. Acts *f smote.*
³ Deut. 9: 18. ⁷ Lev. 23: 30. Ezek. 18: 4. ⁷ 41.
⁴ Ex. 20: 23. ⁸ Ex. 33: 2, 14. Num. 20: 16.

WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE? There are two great interests on foot in the world, with the one or the other of which all men are siding. The interest of sin and wickedness is the devil's interest, and all wicked people side with it. The interest of truth and holiness is God's interest, with which all godly people side; and it is a case that will not admit a neutrality. It concerns us all to inquire whether we are on the Lord's side or not. — *Henry*. We show that we are on the Lord's side by obeying his commands, by a public profession of faith, by standing by the right even when it costs a great deal to do so, and by doing God's work.

DESTROYING GOD'S ENEMIES. Like the men on the Lord's side here, we are to slay, not men, but bad habits, evil thoughts, selfishness, and sin in all their forms, corruption in politics, dishonesty in business, the temptations to intemperance and vice, everything which leads men to turn from being true children of our Heavenly Father.

VIII. **The Prayer of Moses for the People.** — Vs. 30-35. By saying to the people *Ye have sinned a great sin*, Moses would lead them to deep repentance. *Peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.* "He thought that he might be made an *instrument of reconciliation*." — *Bush*. It must have been at great cost to himself. This would make the people feel the greatness of their sin, and yet encourage them to repent by the hope of forgiveness.

31. **And Moses returned unto the Lord, on Mount Sinai.**

32. **If thou wilt forgive their sin.** The conclusion is too good to be expressed in words. **And if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book.** The book that enrols the citizens of his kingdom; or the book of his remembrance, making him as if he had never existed. Thus Moses "offers himself as an atonement for the people, and is willing to be 'blotted out of God's book,' if on this condition they may be spared." — *Rawlinson*. Compare Paul's feeling in Romans 9: 3.

33. **Whosoever hath sinned.** "The soul that sinneth it shall die."

34. **Go, lead the people.** Go on as you have been doing, and I will aid you, for *mine angel shall go before thee*. Not the angel of his presence, the pillar of cloud and fire, but some inferior guidance, as we learn from the prayer of Moses in 33: 12-16. **Nevertheless, although I will not destroy them as a nation, yet I will visit their sin upon them.** It is necessary that they should suffer some of the consequences of their sin, that they may be prevented from falling again into sin (compare 33: 4).

35. **The Lord plagued the people.** We are not to understand by this (with Kalisch) that a pestilence was sent, but only that sufferings of various kinds befell those who had worshipped the calf, and were, in fact, punishments inflicted on them for that transgression.

IX. **The Covenant Renewed.** — The remainder of the book of Exodus shows how the covenant was renewed with the people (34: 10, 27, 28). Their duties were again set before them, and the tables of the covenant renewed. Then the tabernacle was built according to directions, and the Shekinah rested upon it.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Some of the best *Commentaries on Exodus* are the *Cambridge Bible* for schools (\$1.00); *The Expositor's Bible* (\$1.50, Armstrong); *The Handy Commentary* (\$1.00, Cassell Co.); *Pulpit Commentary* (\$2.00, Randolph); *Bible Commentary* (\$3.00, Scribner's); *Preachers' Homiletical Commentary* (Dickinson, London); *Commentaries* by Cowles, Murphy, Alford, Keil, Parker's *People's Bible* (Funk and Wagnalls).

Edersheim's *Exodus and the Wanderings* (\$1.00, Bradley & Co., Boston); Stanley's *Jewish Church*; Blaikie's *Manual of Bible History*; Foster's *Cyclopædia of Illustrations*, Vol. I., pp. 805, 1388-1401, 3144-3152; Trench's *Poems*, p. 201, "Mahmoud, the Breaker of Idols"; Anderson's *Missions in the Sandwich Islands*, pp. 187-190, describing Princess Kapiolani's defiance of the goddess Pele at the Crater of Kilauea in the Hawaiian Islands.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Every Christian, and especially every leader, has need of periods of retirement, away from noise, and business, alone with God and his goodness. He that gives must first receive nourishment, inspiration, comfort. — *Parker*.

2. Promises and professions often fade "like the early dew," when tested by other circumstances. They

Find by degrees the truth that once bore sway,
And all their deep impressions wear away;

So coin grows smooth, in traffic current passed,
Till Cæsar's image is effaced at last.

— *Cowper*.

3. He who is too weak in faith to trust God is often credulous enough to trust idols.

4. The contrast between Aaron and Moses. Any one ready to compromise with sin and use subterfuges is always weak, while there is wonderful power in one brave, true man, when he is right, over multitudes who are conscious of wrong. "One with God is a majority." "One shall chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight."

"The power of the human will is the greatest force in history. Any person of original aims and undaunted courage may become a hero if his heart and soul are in his work. A little man, who draws his inspiration from the fount of spiritual truth, adds to his stature when he becomes vitalized by the one idea that burns within him." — *Van Santvoord*.

5. "Fiery indignation at sin, springing as it does from a jealousy for God's honor, is an emotion which is not too common among men, and one which God's word does not discourage." — *Rawlinson*.

6. The question is not, Which is the orthodox side? Which is the conservative side? Which is the radical side? Which is the liberal side? Which is the popular side? Which is the safe side? but, Which is the Lord's side? — *Trumbull*.

7. There are only two sides. To be on the right side is comfort, strength, blessing; to be on the wrong side is profitless, perilous, and unsatisfactory.

8. God loves to forgive sin, and restore the sinner, but it must be in such a way that it will lead men to hate sin, and forsake it. Hence prayer, the cost to the leaders, some of the evil consequences of sin, the manifested indignation of God.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SUBJECT: IDOLATRY, AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.

SEE THAT the scholars read all of Exodus that is needful to obtain a true understanding of this event.

FOLLOW THE STORY, impressing the teachings of each part with the aid of the following illustrations.

Illustration. INDIGNATION. If you see a stout man beating his delicate wife with a cart-whip, or kicking a puny child before him on the street, it is not at all to your credit if you are ready to wait for a full hearing of both sides of the case before you have a judgment in the premises which will justify you in interfering between the parties. — *Trumbull*.

Illustration. MOSES' POWER over the turbulent. "It is said that a Greek youth who fought in one of the Theban wars was so fair that, had his face been uncovered, his life would have been spared in the thickest of the fight. Virtue makes a like appeal to its enemies." — *Van Santvoord*. So Milton says: —

"Abashed the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely."

Illustration. In the *Sunday-School Times* for June 23, 1888, is an excellent article on the pulverizing of the golden calf. It is exceedingly difficult to pulverize pure gold, "and it cannot be done by any means now known." "The admixture of small proportions of certain metals, notably lead, arsenic, antimony, and tin, will at once render gold refractory and more or less brittle." (Quicksilver is sometimes rubbed into a gold ring to make it brittle, when it is necessary to break it from a finger.) Especially was tin common and used by the ancients as an alloy. Now tin, in certain proportions, will render gold alloys not merely brittle, but as friable as glass. There are even some forms of bronze so brittle that an ingot or image formed of them will burst into pieces when struck with a hammer, or when dropped upon a stone pavement. It is well known at the Government Mint that a small piece of bronze cent-metal, accidentally dropped into a large melt of standard gold, has ruined it for proper working in the mechanical operations of coinage. The deposits of old jewelry which are daily brought to the Mint form, when melted and cast into bars, one of the most refractory of all forms of gold alloys. Such bars often "break like pipe-clay"; and, hard as the metal often is, there is no way for the assayer to handle small samples of it but by putting a piece of the alloy into a steel mortar, and literally pounding and grinding it to powder. The embrittling elements are generally in the solder or "filling" of the jewelry. Now, the golden calf was made from jewelry, and it is quite probable that all the jewelry was not made of pure gold. Or Moses may have used tin when he melted the idol. — From *Patterson Du Bois*.

LESSON III.—JULY 21.

NADAB AND ABIHU.—LEVITICUS 10: 1-11.

Golden Calf.—*Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee.* — LEV. 10: 9.

THE SECTION includes chapters 8, 9, 10, and 24, which are the only historical chapters in Leviticus.

LEVITICUS is so named because it is chiefly devoted to the duties of the Levites who had charge of the whole system of sacrifices, feasts, etc.

TIME.—April, B. C. 1490; on the afternoon (chap. 10: 19) of the first day that the priests entered upon the regular sacrifices of the tabernacle (8: 33; 9: 1), just after the week of consecration of the priests. It was just a year after the Exodus, and nine months after the making of the golden calf, described in our last lesson.

PLACE.—In the camp in the valley of Er-Rahah, before Mount Sinai.

PRONUNCIATION.—A'arōn (A'rōn), Abī'hū, E'lē'zār or El'āzār, El'zāphān, Ith'amār, Mish'ael, Nā'dāb, Uzzi'el or Uz'ziel.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Tabernacle Set Up.—The last part of Exodus is devoted to the tabernacle. For as soon as the principles of the law and covenant were given, the next most important thing was to organize the religious worship of the nation. For this there must be a central place and means of worship, toward which the whole nation should look. This religious center was a beautiful and costly tabernacle, built of acacia wood planks covered with gold, placed in solid silver sockets, and roofed with a delicate tapestry of violet, crimson blue, crimson and white. Over this was spread a tent of goat's hair and of skins dyed red. The tabernacle proper was forty-five feet long, fifteen feet wide, and fifteen high (a cubit being counted as eighteen inches), and surrounded with a court one hundred and fifty feet long and seventy-five feet wide. Within the tabernacle were the ark of the covenant, the table for shewbread, the golden candlestick, the golden altar of incense, and in front of it was the brazen altar for burnt offerings.

The people contributed with great liberality for this costly work; for they must have a part in whatever pertains to worship.

Every part of the tabernacle had its symbolic meaning for the instruction of the people.

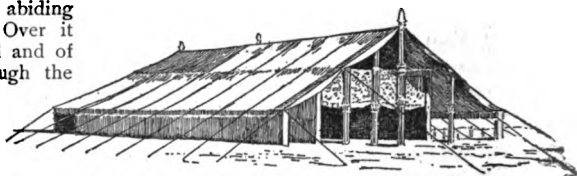
1. And ¹ Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, ² took ^a either of them his censer, and put fire therein, and ^b put incense thereon, and offered ³ strange fire before the LORD, which he ^c commanded them not.

¹ Lev. 16: 1; 22: 9. Num. 3: 3, 4.
² Lev. 16: 12. Num. 16: 18.

³ Ex. 30: 9.

Rev. Ver.: a each. b laid.
 c had not commanded them.

The tabernacle symbolized the abiding presence of God with his people. Over it was the Shekinah, the pillar of cloud and of fire, which guided the nation through the wilderness, and whence came the voice of God to their hearts. So Jesus tabernacled among us, Immanuel, "God with us," the glory, the comfort, and the guide of his people.



The Tabernacle.

The tabernacle was finished and set up on the first month of the second year.

II. **The Consecration of the Priests.** — Leviticus, chaps. 8, 9. The next duty was to consecrate the priests to their office in connection with the tabernacle. The first seven chapters of Leviticus describe some of the sacrifices and the ritual. Chapters 8 and 9 describe the inauguration of Aaron and his sons as chief priests with appropriate ceremonies.

III. **The Divine Fire on the Altar.** — 9: 22-24. At the conclusion of the ceremonies, the glory of the Lord shone out before the people and a fire came out from him and kindled the altar flames. "In this manner God afterwards testified his acceptance of the sacrifice of Gideon (Judges 6: 20, 21), of Elijah (1 Kings 18: 38), and of the sacrifices of Solomon, at the dedication of the temple (2 Chron. 7: 1, 2)."

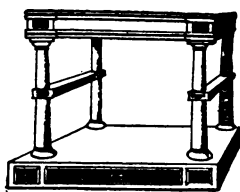


Table for Shewbread.

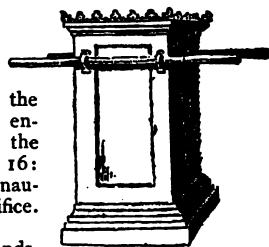
This fire was to be perpetual (Lev. 6: 13). "It was to be continually fed with the fuel especially provided by the congregation, and with the daily burnt offerings." "Tradition assures us that it never was quenched till the destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar." — *Dr. Ginsburg.*

IV. **The Sin of Nadab and Abihu.** — V. 1. And Nadab and Abihu. Eldest sons of Aaron (Ex. 6: 23), just consecrated as priests. Took either of them his censer. A small portable vessel of metal fitted to receive burning coals from the altar, and on which the incense for burning was sprinkled. And put incense thereon. The burning of incense composed of fragrant spices, was a symbol of prayer.

PRAYER SYMBOLIZED BY INCENSE. — (1) It is composed of the sweet spices of praise, of gratitude, of confession, of heart-desires, of longing after God, of love to God, and love to men. (2) It is pleasing to God as fragrance is to our senses. God loves to have his children pray, and earnestly ask for the best things. (3) It ascends only in the flame of sincere devotion, kindled by the Holy Spirit. (4) It is offered on the golden altar of the heart, in the holy place of consecration, obedience, and love. (5) It is offered in connection with the sacrifice of Christ, in his name and for his sake. And offered strange fire. "They filled their vessels with common fire instead of taking it from the holy fire of the altar, which was always to be used in burning incense." — *Ginsburg.* Commanded them not to do. Leviticus 16: 12; and implied in 1: 7; 6: 12, 13.

The sin seems to have consisted of several transgressions: — (1) They each took *his* own censer, and not the sacred utensil of the sanctuary. (2) They both offered it together, whereas the incense was only to be offered by one. (3) They presumptuously encroached upon the functions of the high priest; for, according to the Law, the high priest alone burnt incense *in a censer*. (See chap. 16: 12, 13; Num. 16: 18, 35-40) (4) They offered the incense at an unauthorized time, since it was apart from the morning and evening sacrifice. — *Ginsburg.* (5) They used strange fire.

The whole was a wilful and public disobedience to direct commands. They assumed to do their duties in their own way.



Altar of Incense.

2. And there ^d went out ¹ fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD.

3. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This *is it* that the LORD spake, saying, I will be sanctified in them ² that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be ³ glorified. ⁴ And Aaron held his peace.

4. And Moses called Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of ⁵ Uzziel the uncle of Aaron, and said unto them, ⁶ Come near, ⁶ carry your brethren from before the sanctuary out of the camp.

5. So they ⁷ went near, and carried them in their coats out of the camp; as Moses had said.

6. And Moses said unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons, ⁸ uncover ⁷ not your heads, neither rend your clothes; ^h lest ye die, and lest ⁸ wrath come upon all the people: but let your brethren, the whole house of Israel, bewail the burning which the LORD hath kindled.

7. ⁹ And ye shall not go out from the door of the ¹ tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: ¹⁰ for the anointing oil of the LORD *is* upon you. And they did according to the word of Moses.

8. And the LORD spake unto Aaron, saying,

9. ¹ Do ¹¹ not drink wine nor strong drink, thou, nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the ^k tabernacle of the congregation, lest ye die: *it shall be* a statute for ever throughout your generations:

¹ Lev. 9: 24. Num. 16: 35.

² Sam. 6: 7.

³ Ex. 19: 22; 29: 44. Lev.

21: 6. Isa. 52: 11.

⁴ Isa. 49: 3. Ezek. 28: 22.

John 13: 31, 32; 14: 13.

⁵ Psa. 39: 9.

⁶ Ex. 6: 18, 22. Num. 3:

19, 20.

⁶ Luke 7: 12. Acts 5: 6, 9.

10; 8: 2.

⁷ Lev. 21: 10. Deut. 33: 9.

Ezek. 24: 16, 17.

⁸ Num. 16: 22. Josh. 22:

18, 20; 2 Sam. 24: 1.

⁹ Lev. 21: 12.

¹⁰ Ex. 28: 41. Lev. 8: 30.

¹¹ Ezek. 44: 21. Luke 1: 15.

¹ Tim. 3: 3. Tit. 1: 7.

Rev. Ver.: ^d came forth fire from before.

^e Draw near.

^f Let not the hair of your heads

go loose.

^h that ye die not and that he be not wroth with all the congregation.

ⁱ tent of meeting, lest.

^j Drink no wine.

^k tent of meeting, that ye die not.

V. **Their Punishment.** — Vs. 2-7. 2. And there went out fire from the Lord, from the Shekinah resting on the tabernacle (Ex. 40: 34, 38). And devoured them, destroyed their lives on the spot.

3. **Moses said unto Aaron**, not in reproof, but in explanation of the terrible judgment. **I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me.** I will be made to appear holy through those who minister in my name. If they will not accomplish this by obedience, I must do it by showing my hatred of all disobedience. **I will be glorified by the people who see my love of right and hatred of wrong, in the intensest light.** **And Aaron held his peace.** He submitted in silence to the overwhelming calamity. So the Psalmist, "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it" (39: 9).

With silence only as their benediction,
God's angels come

Where in the shadow of a great affliction
The soul sits dumb.

— Whittier.

4. **Carry . . . out of the camp**, where all corpses were buried. The ceremonies must not be injured nor interrupted by their presence.

6. **Uncover not your heads.** One of the expressions of mourning. **Neither rend your clothes**, another manifestation of sorrow. **Lest ye die**, because by these signs of mourning they would put private grief above the service of God, and because it would be interpreted as expressing dissatisfaction with what God had done. **Let your brethren . . . bewail.** The whole people might mourn, for this would not only do no harm, but would deepen the impression of the event.

VI. **The Occasion of their Sin, Strong Drink.** — Vs. 8-10. 9. **Do not drink wine nor strong drink**, any intoxicating drink, **when ye go into the tabernacle**, when performing your sacred duties. "The Palestinian Chaldee adds here, 'as thy sons did who died by the burning fire.' The same precept is repeated in Ezekiel 44: 21. 'Neither shall any priest drink wine when they enter into the inner court.'" — Ginsburg. This implies

10. And that ye may ¹ put difference between ¹ holy and unholy, and between ^m unclean and clean ;

11. ² And that ye may teach the children of Israel all the statutes which the LORD hath spoken unto them by the hand of Moses.

¹ Lev. 11: 47; 20: 25. Jer. 15: 19. Ezek. 22: 26; 44: 23.
² Deut. 24: 8. Neh. 8: 2, 8, 9, 13. Jer. 18: 18. Mal. 2: 7.

Rev. Ver.: / the holy and the common.
 m the unclean and the.



Mitre, Breastplate, and
Censer.

what an "ancient tradition says, that Nadab and Abihu had partaken too freely of the drink offering, and performed their service in a state of intoxication, when they were incapacitated to distinguish between what was legal and illegal." — *Ginsburg*.

FIRST. STRONG DRINK DESTROYS MEN. *Lest ye die.* The penalty on Nadab and Abihu was sudden death. For the very government and laws were at stake. If these leaders could defy God's commands, and disobey Moses, in the very act of worship, before all the people; who would respect the laws or the lawgiver? And to do it while drunk simply increased the sin.

ILLUSTRATION. One noxious seed destroyed may prevent hundreds of millions from filling the fields. He that destroys the first parent insects upon his garden plants, in that one stroke destroys multitudes that otherwise would spoil his garden. He that puts out the little fire may save a city from burning up. So God's act of severity here was one of purest mercy.

INTEMPERANCE destroys multitudes of lives. It shortens many more. It prepares the system for disease.

ILLUSTRATIONS. In Albany, N. Y., when the cholera prevailed in 1832, there were 5,000 members of the temperance society there, and only two of them died; while there were 334 deaths among the 20,000 who were not members, or more than eighty for every 5,000, forty times as many as among the temperance people. "Vitality depends largely upon habits; good habits increase it, bad habits waste it. Shakespeare has a good word upon this point in "As You Like It," where Adam tells why he is so strong in his old age.

Though I look old, yet I am strong and lusty;
 For in my youth I never did apply
 Hot and rebellious liquors to my blood;
 Nor did not with unbashful forehead woo
 The means of weakness and debility;
 Therefore my age is as a lusty winter,
 Frosty but kindly.

— T. T. Munger.

"The evils wrought by drink were more deadly because more continuous than the three great historic scourges of war, famine, and pestilence combined." — *Hon. Wm. E. Gladstone*.

DEATH, MORAL AND PHYSICAL, is frequently the result of drinking intoxicating liquors. They destroy body and soul; they shorten the life by weakening the body; they lead to injuries and murder. Every disease has a new advantage over the one who habitually uses strong drink. Intoxicating liquors ruin the mind and destroy the soul. They take away the blessedness and usefulness of life here, and the hope of eternal life.

SECOND. STRONG DRINK DULLS THE MORAL NATURE. 10. That ye may put difference between holy and unholy, etc. Do not touch strong drink, for it so darkens the moral understanding that you do not clearly distinguish between what is right and what is wrong, what is clean and what is unclean. This is the natural effect of liquor. It distorts the



Golden Candlestick.

conscience, it confuses the vision, it warps the judgment, it gives false courage to do wrong. Hence, so many commit crimes under its influence who would never commit them when sober. This does not excuse the crime, for no one has a right to put himself where he will be overthrown into crime.

ILLUSTRATION. The effect of strong drink on the mind is like that of colored glasses to the vision, or those concave and convex mirrors which distort all things seen in them.

ILLUSTRATION. Edison said that his strongest personal reason for total abstinence was that thus he had the clearest brain for work.

ILLUSTRATION. "A story is told of Ulysses, King of Ithaca, whose adventures are related in Homer's poem of the *Odyssey*. Ulysses did not wish to leave home to go to the Trojan war, so he pretended to be mad. A very shrewd neighbor said: 'We will soon find out whether he is mad or not. He is ploughing in the field yonder. We will put his little boy in the furrow in front of the plough. If he plough over him, then he is mad; if he turn aside, then he is only pretending.' They acted upon this advice, but the father would not drive over his little boy, so they found Ulysses out, and he had to go to the war." The intemperate man shows his moral madness by destroying his family, bringing his children to poverty, and doing all he can by example to ruin them forever. Very few, uninfamed with liquor, would do to their families what drinking men by thousands are continually doing.

THIRD. IT DESTROYS THE POWER FOR GOOD OVER OTHERS. 11. That ye may teach the children of Israel. One of the functions of the Levites was to instruct the people. Teachers need to have a clear mind, and to set a good example. Strong drink destroys both these powers of the teacher, who should "be filled with the Spirit" and not with "wine, wherein is excess" (Eph. 5: 18).

Of all men, the leaders and teachers of the people should practise total abstinence.

ILLUSTRATION. One woman determined that her husband should know how he looked when he was drunk. She knew how he looked well enough; but the man himself had a very imperfect idea of the state of the case. So once when he came home and fell into a maudlin slumber, she sent for the photographer to come. The photographer did his work, and did it well, and when the photograph was finished and laid beside the husband's plate at breakfast, it was a revelation. There was no chance for contradiction; the sun tells no lies. How many there are who, if they could only get one view of themselves in their tipsy, maudlin idiocy, would *at once and forever change their course in life*. — *Rev. H. L. Hastings*. Every teacher or leader in society holds up his moral picture for the taught to look at and be influenced by.

ILLUSTRATIONS. DEACON GILES' DISTILLERY. The tract with this name, written by Rev. Dr. Cheever, is one of the most effective of temperance illustrations. It represents, as in a dream, that the workmen in Deacon Giles' distillery suddenly left him, when a set of singular-looking fellows applied for work, and were permitted to run the distillery by night. They were very busy, and made a large quantity of rum. But they wrote on each barrel and cask invisible inscriptions, which remained invisible till the first glass was drawn, but then burned in flames of awful red. Some of the titles ran thus: "Consumption sold here. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." "Convulsions and Epilepsies. Inquire at A. Giles' Distillery." "Insanity and Murder. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." "Dropsy and Rheumatism, Putrid Fever and Cholera in the collapse. Inquire at Amos Giles' Distillery." "Delirium Tremens. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." Some of the demons had even taken sentences from the scriptures and marked the hogsheads thus: "Who hath woe? Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." "Who hath redness of eyes? Inquire at A. Giles' Distillery." Others had written sentences like the following: "A potion from the lake of fire and brimstone. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery." All these inscriptions burned when visible, a "still and awful red." One of the most terrible in its appearance was as follows: "Weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery."

In the course of the week these casks were sold, and as soon as the retailer began to draw from them the invisible inscription flamed out on the cask, visible to every beholder. Rumseller and rumdrinker were affrighted at the truth thus read. One would think that the bare sight would have been enough to terrify every drunkard from his cups, and every trader from his dreadful traffic.

ILLUSTRATION. Cruikshank, the artist, offered £100 for proof of a violent crime committed by a total abstainer, and the money remains unclaimed to this day. I offer as much for proof of any one case — either in the church or out of it — where drunkenness has been cured without total abstinence. In the present shaky circumstances the only safe way of drinking — as an Irishman puts it — is to "leave off before you begin." — *Farrar*.

LESSON IV. — JULY 28.

JOURNEYING TO CANAAN. — NUMBERS 10: 29-36.

Golden Text. — *Come thou with us and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.* — NUM. 10: 29.

THE SECTION includes a general view of the book of Numbers, and particularly chapter 9: 1-5, the second passover; chapter 10, the new start from Sinai; chapter 11, the story of the quails; chapter 12, the revolt of Aaron and Miriam; chapter 16, the rebellion of Korah; chapter 17, Aaron's budding rod; chapter 20, the waters of Meribah. Together with

THE ACCOUNT IN DEUTERONOMY, chapters 7, 8, and 11.

THE BOOK OF NUMBERS is the fourth book of the Pentateuch, and is named from the two numberings recorded in the book; one giving the census, or mustering of the people near the beginning, the other near the end of the forty years' wandering.

THE TIME of this lesson is at the beginning of the movement from Sinai on the second stage of the march to Canaan, which took place on the 20th day of the second month of the second year after leaving Egypt, probably about the middle of May, B.C. 1490.

PLACE. — The start was made from the plain of Er-Râhah at the base of Mount Sinai, and the journey was made through the wilderness to Kadesh Barnea, south of Palestine.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Hô'bâb, Kă'děsh Băr'něă, Kîb'rôth Hâtă'ăvâh, Răgû'êl, Reû'êl, or Rêû'êl, Tîh (Tee).

29. And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of ¹ *Raguel* the Midianite, Moses' father in law, We are journeying unto the place of which the LORD said, ² I will give it you: come thou with us, and ³ we will do thee good: for ⁴ the LORD hath spoken good concerning Israel.

¹ Ex. 2: 18.² Gen. 12: 7.³ Judg. 1: 16; 4: 11.Rev. Ver.: *a* Reuel.⁴ Gen. 32: 12. Ex. 3: 8; 6: 7, 8.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Stay at Sinai. — The children of Israel reached Sinai in the third month of the year they escaped from Egypt (Ex. 19: 1), and left it the 20th of the second month of the next year (Num. 10: 11). Hence they were before Sinai for nearly a year.

II. The People Become a Nation. — The reason of this long delay is apparent. The people left Egypt a mere crowd of fugitive slaves, with only the rudiments of national organization, and the dimmest religious ideas. But the interval had effected an immense change. They had now become an organized people, with laws, a constitution or covenant, a priesthood, a religious ritual, and house of worship; and with a political and military organization, under judges and officers placed over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens (Ex. 18: 25; Deut. 1: 15), and a general council of seventy elders (Ex. 24: 1; Num. 11: 24-26) which the rabbis believe was the origin of the Sanhedrim.

III. Their Number. — According to the census of Numbers 1 and 2, there were 603,550 men, twenty years old and upwards, besides the 22,000 Levites. This would naturally imply about 2,000,000 in all. But Prof. Willis J. Beecher, of Auburn Theological Seminary, in a lecture not long ago suggested that the enumeration may have been technical, just as we count an army. A regiment consists of 1000 men, while often in various ways not more than 400 or 500 are present, and yet we call it a regiment. 600,000 may be equivalent to 600 regiments, "the thousands" containing but a few hundreds, so that there may not have been more than 300,000 men or a million in all.

IV. The Pilgrimage to the Promised Land. — V. 29. And Moses said unto Hobab, the son of Raguel. *Raguel* is the same as Reuel of Exodus 2: 18. Reuel is generally regarded as the same person with Jethro (Ex. 3: 1), Reuel being his name, and Jethro, which means Excellency, his honorary title. But there are other opinions. **Moses' father in law.** The word for "father in law" in Hebrew has a wider meaning and signifies any relation by marriage. So that Hobab may have been Moses' "brother in law." **We are journeying.** They were just ready to renew their journey after their long abode at Sinai (v. 33). **Unto the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you.** This

30. And he said unto him, I will not go ; but I will depart to mine own land, and to my kindred.

was the promise made to Abraham (Gen. 12: 7; 13: 15; 17: 8), and repeated to Jacob (Gen. 28: 13; Psa. 105: 9-11), and to Moses and the children of Israel (Ex. 3: 8). The promises were repeated to "make assurance doubly sure."

TRUE LIFE A PILGRIMAGE. 1. It is deliverance from the bondage of sin, a hard and bitter bondage, like that in Egypt.

2. The experience in preparation for escape with its wonders, its promises, its increasing bitterness of the bondage, its turning toward religious means, its leaders and helpers are all types of the early experience of many who would turn from sin.

3. The crossing of the Red Sea is a type of conversion, the beginning of a new life.

4. The trying experiences of the early journey, its songs of praise, its hours of discouragement, its thirst, its wells and palm trees of Elim, are often paralleled in the beginnings of the Christian life.

5. The pillar of cloud and fire typifies the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

6. The manna illustrates the daily supply of spiritual food.

7. The giving of the Law expresses the clearer and fuller views one gains of duty, a voice of God heard far more clearly than ever before.

8. The assenting to the covenant is the type of consecration to God and public consecration of religion.

9. The tabernacle and its services are the symbol of the church and religious worship.

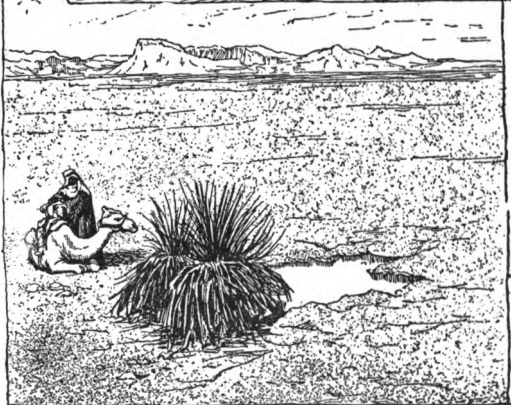
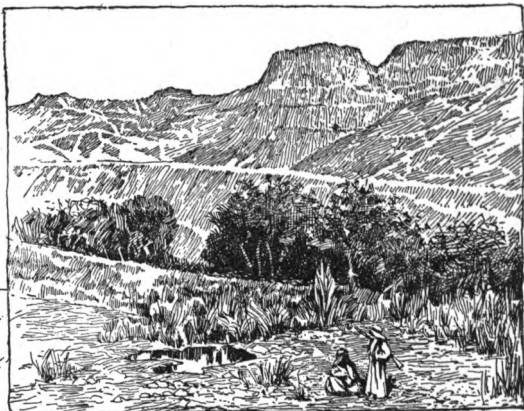
10. The forty years in the wilderness (see below) are the type of the long discipline of life.

11. We are going to the promised land, toward God, and perfect character, and our eternal heavenly home. We have never seen this land, but we have glimpses of its glories, and many promises to sustain us on the journey. It will be a land flowing with milk and honey, with every conceivable good, yea, more than eye hath seen or heart conceived.

V. The Invitation. — Vs. 29-32. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good. Two reasons are given why Hobab should accept this invitation.

FIRST REASON. THE BLESSING TO HIMSELF. "We will do thee good"; you will partake of all the blessings we receive, you will have the manna, the guiding pillar, the loving care, the fatherly discipline, the blessings of the true God and the true religion, and an inheritance in the promised land; you may be sure of these, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.

30. And he said, I will not go. This motive was not sufficient to move him. The motive is a good one, and should be urged. But it is not so effective as some other motives, and there is danger that it will be emphasized too much. The blessings of the unseen



2

Kadesh Barnea.
(1, Trumbull. 2, Robinson.)

31. And he said, Leave us not, I pray thee; forasmuch as thou knowest how we are to encamp in the wilderness, and thou ^bmayest be to us ¹ instead of eyes.

32. And it shall be, if thou go with us, yea, it shall be, that ^awhat goodness the LORD shall do unto us, the same will we do unto thee.

33. And they ^ddeparted from ³the mount of the LORD three days' journey: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD ⁴went before them ^ein the three days' journey, to ^fsearch out a resting place for them.

34. And ⁵the cloud of the LORD *was* ⁶upon them by day, when they ^hwent out of the camp.

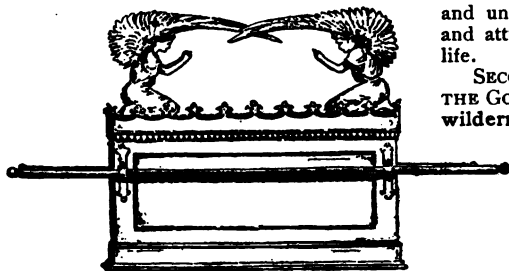
¹ Job 29: 15.
² Judg. 1: 16.
³ Ex. 3: 1.

⁴ Deut. 1: 33. Josh. 3: 3.
⁵ Psa. 132: 8. Jer. 31: 2.
⁶ Ezek. 20: 6.

⁷ Ex. 13: 21. Rev. Ver.: ⁸ shalt be.
⁹ Neh. 9: 12.

^a good soever
^b set forward
^c omit in the.

^d seek out.
^e over.
^f set forward from.



Ark of the Covenant.

and unexperienced future are often not so great and attractive as the present joys of the worldly life.

SECOND REASON. THE POWER TO HELP ON THE GOOD CAUSE. 31. Thou knowest . . . the wilderness, and thou mayest be to us instead

of eyes. Moses had been in portions of the wilderness, but Hobab had been familiar with the whole region all his life, and had traversed it again and again. "The divine guidance of the pillar of the cloud would not render superfluous the human conductor, who could indicate the spots where water, fuel, and pasture might be found, the dangers from hurricanes, and

the localities infested by robbers." — *Bible Commentary*. Hobab belonged to a powerful tribe, and thus would be able to obtain supplies from other tribes, and to gain assistance or protection from them. Bruce says also that the Arabs often cover up their wells so that it is difficult to find them. The very great difficulty most travellers have had for many years in finding the wells at Kadesh Barnea by the misleading of guides, as described in Dr. Trumbull's *Kadesh Barnea*, is a good example of the need of such a man as Hobab.

This reason seems to have had the effect of convincing Hobab, who was a Kenite, (Judg. 1: 16), a branch of the Midianites. "From Judges 1: 16; 4: 11; 1 Samuel 15: 6, it is evident that his posterity, under the name of "Kenites," had an abiding place among the tribes of Israel, even as late as the time of Saul." — *Bush*. This motive is still most powerful over many minds. God wants you to be a Christian not only because it is best for you, but because there is work for you to do in his kingdom; there are multitudes to help, battles to fight, victories to gain. (Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, Vol. V., last chapter, "Peace.")

VI. The Abiding Presence. — V. 33. And they departed, see *Time*, from the mount of the Lord. Sinai. Three days' journey, before they stopped for any length of time. They went into the wilderness of Paran, the modern desert of Teeh (or Tih), to Kibroth-Hattaavah, "the graves of gluttony." Here Professor Palmer found the remains of an ancient camp surrounded by an immense number of graves. The ark of the covenant, so called because it contained the covenant of the Law, on the two tables of stone.

It symbolized (1) God's abiding presence. (2) The sacred covenant of God with his people. (3) That righteousness was the heart and center of their life. (4) Its cover was the mercy seat, to show the need and the way of forgiveness and righteousness through mercy. "A most remarkable parallel to the Mosaic ark with its contents was found, some years since, by Rassam at Balawat, east of Mosul, in a temple of Asurnasirpal, two alabaster slabs enclosed in a marble casket, each 9 inches by 13 inches, written on both sides, and containing 570 signs." — *Prof. Wm. H. Green*. Went before them, to lead the way, and point out the place of their encampment, a resting place for them. This was exceptional, as in Joshua 3: 3, 6, for its usual place was in the midst of the host (Num. 2: 17).

VII. The Guiding Pillar. — Vs. 34-36. 34. And the cloud of the Lord was

The Ark of the Covenant.

35. And it came to pass, when the ark set forward, that Moses said,
¹ Rise up, ¹ LORD, and let thine enemies be scattered;
 And let them that hate thee flee before thee.
36. And when it rested, he said,
 Return, O Lord, unto the ¹ many thousands of Israel.

¹ Psa. 68: 1; 132: 8.Rev. Ver.: ¹ O Lord.¹ ten thousands of the thousands.

upon them by day, rising high above the host, a conspicuous object that could be seen not only by the marshalled host, but by the scattered companies of women and children, as they fed their flocks, and followed afar off the marvellous signal of the divine presence. A great host marching through a country without roads or other marks of civilization, must be provided with some conspicuous object to serve as a signal to the main body, and to all straggling parties connected with it. Hence the round grate, full of kindled fuel, elevated on a pole, which was carried before caravans and armies in the East. The ancient Persians carried a sacred fire in silver altars before their armies, and other ancient nations observed a similar custom. For fuller description see Numbers 9: 15-23.

35. **When the ark set forward, Moses said.** "It appears from these words that the marches of the Israelites began and ended with prayer, a significant lesson to the church of all after ages."—*Dr. Ginsburg*. **Rise up, Lord,** as opposed to standing or sitting still. Be ready to help, to guide, to defend.

THE NEED OF GUIDANCE. We are called to contemplate a numerous host of men, women, and children, travelling through an almost trackless wilderness, passing over a dreary waste, a vast sandy desert, without compass or human guide. What a thought! what a spectacle! There were those millions of people moving along without any knowledge of the route by which they were to travel, as wholly dependent upon God for guidance as for food and all beside.—*C. H. Mackintosh*. There were enemies of whom they knew almost nothing; and dangers of various kinds, from hunger, from thirst, from serpents, from wandering tribes. Nor could the people know what was best for them to train them for the conquest of the promised land, and for the best use of it when they had obtained it, to be the people of God, and to make known to the nations the true religion and the true God.

OUR NEED OF GUIDANCE. Life is to us an unknown sea; or a trackless region of country. The future is hidden by an impenetrable veil. We do not know what is to befall us, what circumstances will surround us, what temptations we shall meet, what work is to be done, what dangers incurred, what trials endured.

THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AS A SYMBOL OF GOD. 1. It was real, and yet without definite form, and hence impressed the actual existence of God, and at the same time avoided all material likeness that would lead to idolatry. 2. The cloud is a visible sign of that moisture which is all-pervasive in nature, teaching that God has special manifestations and yet is omnipresent. 3. It adapts itself to varying circumstances, and yet is permanent. Mr. Ruskin describes a cloud in the Alps which was perfectly stationary by a mountain peak, although a gale was blowing through it, for it was being continually formed by the moisture in the wind. 4. The cloud hides and yet reveals. Clouds and darkness are around God's throne, but their presence there reveals the presence of God, and something of his nature; as the human body of Christ hid the divine in him, and yet revealed it. 5. The position of the cloud, balancing itself in the air without support, hinted at the self-existent, independent nature of God. 6. By night it shone out as a bright light in the surrounding darkness; and symbolized God as the light, the comfort, the source of life, and beauty, and power, yet destructive of all evil, immaterial, omnipresent, glorious.

CHRIST, OUR LIGHT AND GUIDE. Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Word of God, is our pillar of cloud and fire. He has come to be the light of the world. He teaches us the way to heaven, and shows the way by having walked in it. He is wise and strong, knowing all things present, past, and future, for he is divine. He shines through the Word, giving light in the darkness. He abides upon his church, and in the temple of each loving heart. He leads us by his providence, by his Spirit, by the principles of his Word, by his example. All who follow him will reach the promised land.

Compare Newman's hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light."

A STRANGE GUIDANCE. The Lord was guiding the people to the promised land. We can imagine them saying, Now that the Lord guides us we will be led only in pleasant ways, in green pastures and beside still waters, away from dangers and enemies, away from

serpents, and drought, and hunger, and we will reach the promised land by the shortest route, in the quickest time. But, as a matter of fact, the Lord had led them into the trouble by the Red Sea, into the dry and thirsty land where no water was. He led them where they suffered from hunger and thirst, where they *Discipline of Life.* were bitten by serpents, where enemies stood ready to attack them, and kept them forty years on a journey that could have been accomplished in a few weeks. The Lord himself did this by his guiding pillar, as well as led them by the wells and palm groves of Elim, fed them with manna, delivered them from their enemies, and brought water out of the rock.

Why did the Lord lead them thus? It was to prepare them for the promised land when they should reach it, and fit them to conquer all enemies, to be a prosperous and holy nation that would commend to all other nations the God they obeyed and the truths by which they lived. Without this discipline their going to the promised land would have been a failure. So it is that God leads us in strange ways toward heaven, in order that we may be fitted for heaven's joys and heaven's duties.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. *The true life in this world is a pilgrimage* from worldliness and sin to the promised land of holiness and heaven.

2. God calls us all to go on this pilgrimage; to leave all who insist on remaining in sin, however dear to us they may be.

3. God gives us great and precious promises to induce us to go. He makes it reasonable as well as right. These inducements are twofold, — the personal blessings promised to the people of God; and the privilege of serving him, and doing good.

4. We are of ourselves ignorant of the way. The future is unknown to us. We need a wise guide who knows all things, who can see the present and the future events.

5. We are weak amid unknown enemies, dangers, and temptations. We need a strong and proved guide. The Alpine guide said to the traveller who hesitated to step on his hand over a precipice, "This hand never lost a man." Jesus Christ never lost a man.

6. We are sinful, full of imperfections and mistakes. We need a good and loving guide. Jesus Christ is such a guide, — loving, strong, and wise.

7. The Bible is the pillar of cloud where God is made manifest.

8. The Holy Spirit is the pillar of fire, enlightening, cheering, purifying, life-giving.

9. God leads us in strange ways. Our lives are gradually unfolded before us. No one knows beforehand the way in which God will lead him; but he knows that blessings will shine upon him all the way, and it will lead to a land overflowing with good things.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

A BRIEF REVIEW of the year since leaving Egypt is needful in order to understand the circumstances.

THE PREPARATION of the people for further journeying has been made. Note in what this preparation consisted. See *Explanatory*, Nos. 1, 2, and 3.

SUBJECT: THE PILGRIMAGE AND THE INVITATION.

I. THE PILGRIMAGE OF LIFE (v. 29). Compare with Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Illustration. What is a "pilgrimage"? The dictionary thus defines it exactly: "A journey for religious purposes to a place esteemed holy." How different life would be to most people if they honestly figured it as a journey for a religious purpose! On Albert Durer's monument is the one word "*Emigravit*." The old citizens of Nuremberg whisper when they read it, "Yes; he has *emigrated*." — C. S. Robinson.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT. The pilgrimage (Heb. 11: 8-10, 13-16; 1 Pet. 2: 11). The Promised Land (1 Cor. 2: 9, 10; Rev. 21: 1-4; 22: 1-5).

II. THE INVITATION (vs. 29-32). The two motives presented.

Illustration. "It is a calumny to say that men are moved to heroic action by ease, hope of pleasure, recompense, — sugar-plums of any kind in this world or the next. In the meanest mortal there lies something nobler." "It is not to taste sweet things, but to do noble and true things, and vindicate himself under God's heaven as a God-made man, that the poorest son of Adam surely longs. Show him the way of doing that, the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero. They wrong man greatly who say he is to be seduced by ease.

Difficulty, abnegation, martyrdom, death are the allurements that act on the heart of man." — *Carlyle, Heroes and Hero Worship.*

III. THE GUIDING PILLAR (vs. 33-36). The dangers, the unknown way, and the guide.

Illustration. Newman's beautiful hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light."

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT. Christ our light and guide (John 1: 4, 5, 9, 17, 18). Like the pillar of cloud and of fire (Heb. 1: 3). Christ the way (John 14: 6). He has sent the Holy Spirit to be an ever-present guide (John 14: 16, 17; 16: 7, 13). His word our guide (2 Tim. 3: 15, 16; 2 Pet. 1: 18-21). Led into trials and troubles, to fit us for everlasting life (2 Cor. 4: 17, 18; Jas. 1: 2, 3; 1 Pet. 1: 7, 8). He brings good out of ill (Rom. 8: 28; 1 Cor. 10: 13).

Illustration. There is a little poem in which we are compared to an engineer on a steamship down deep in the vessel where he cannot see the way, but he obeys the orders of the pilot, who is above and who does see. So we, ignorant of the future and its dangers, may yet follow him who knows all and guides safely.

And so in the wearisome journey
Over life's troubled sea,

I know not the way I am going,
But Jesus shall pilot me.

— *Forster's Cyclopaedia of Poet.* III., 3619.

Illustration. Mammoth Cave is a labyrinth of winding paths, two hundred miles in length, in different stories, one below another. On every side there are dangers and pitfalls, — here the Bottomless Pit, there the Maelstrom, here Scylla, and there Charybdis, there "the black hole," and the Dead Sea. The darkness is absolute; it can almost be felt. No one can find his way without a guide. If left behind it is not safe to move. A friend once got left behind and was alone in the dark, and the twenty minutes seemed an eternity. Some of our party lingered behind, and then we heard them calling to us that they had lost their way. We could see their lights, and hear their voices, but they did not know the way to us. After we had gone some little distance into its depths, we came to a hall called the Methodist Church. Here one of the guides mounted a high rock and called our attention to a short sermon he wished to preach. The sermon was, "Keep close to your guide." And we soon found that the only safety was in giving careful heed to the guide's sermon. And we found too, that the best place was near the guide, where we could hear most plainly his descriptions and stories connected with the places. Jesus is our guide. He never leads us into bad places or wrong-doings. Sometimes he guides in strange ways, but always the best ways in the end.

*Keep Close to
Your Guide.*

LESSON V. — AUGUST 4.

THE REPORT OF THE SPIES. — NUMBERS 13: 17-20, 23-33.

Golden Text. — *The Lord is with us; fear them* **IN THE WILDERNESS.**
not. — NUM. 14: 9.

THE SECTION includes Numbers 13 and 14, and the **Second year of the PARALLEL ACCOUNT** in Deuteronomy 1: 1, 2, **Exodus.**
19-36; also Hebrews 3: 7-19; 4: 1-3.

TIME. — July-August, B.C. 1490, the time of the first ripe grapes (v. 20), when the spies were sent out. They were gone forty days.

PLACE. — At this time the Israelites were encamped at Kadesh Barnea, just south of the southern border of Palestine. The place is now called Ain Qadees, "the holy well." Kadesh means "the holy," the sanctuary, and Barnea, "the desert of wandering." It is fifty miles south of Beersheba, and eleven days' journey from their Sinai encampment (Deut. 1: 2). Dr. Trumbull, by a personal visit, identified the ancient Kadesh with the modern Ain Qadees. He says it is the strategic stronghold on the southern border of Canaan. Here are two wells and a large pool, and the stream flowing from a rock. The Wady Qadees is an extensive, hill-encircled plain, several miles wide, with shrubs, and flowers, and grass, and water, with abundant room for the encampment of Israel. It was the central point of the people for nearly thirty-eight years (see *Dr. Trumbull's Kadesh Barnea*).

17. And Moses sent them to spy out the land of Canaan, and said unto them, get you up this ¹ way ^a southward, and go up ² into the ^b mountain:

18. And see the land, what it *is*; and the people that dwelleth therein, whether they *be* strong or weak, ^c few or many;

19. And what the land *is* that they dwell in, whether it *be* good or bad; and what cities *they be* that they dwell in, whether in ^d tents, or in strong holds;

¹ Num. 13: 21.

² Gen. 14: 10.

Judg. 1: 9, 19.

Rev. Ver.: ^a by the south.
^b mountains.

^c whether they be few.
^d camps.

PRONUNCIATIONS.— Ah'f'mān; Am'ālēkites; Am'ōrites; A'nāk; Ar'ābāh; Bēēr'shēbā, or Bēershe'ba; Ca'nāan (Ka'nān); Esh'cōl (Es'kōl); Hā'māth; Hāzē'rōth; Hit'tites; Jēh'usites; Jēphūn'nēh; Kā'dēsh Bār'nēā; Pā'rān; Qā'dēes, or Qā'dis; Rē'hōb; Rith'māh; Shē'shāi (Shē'shā); Tāl'māi (Tāl'mā); Zin; Zō'an.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Situation.—The Israelites had now come to the borders of the promised land. Between them and it was a natural defence of hills, up which they must go to the higher land, and something of a wilderness. All that could be done for them in the fifteen months since they had departed from Egypt had been done. They had had various experiences of God's goodness and power, and of the reality of his presence. They had a wise leader, religious worship, political organization, laws, food, and guidance.

More than this, there is evidence that the way was unusually open. From the monuments of Egypt and Assyria we learn that "the weakness of Egypt and Babylonia was the opportunity of Israel; because Palestine had ceased to be an Egyptian province and because neither Babylonians nor Assyrians were strong enough to mingle in its politics."—*Sayce, Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 273.

II. The Command to go Forward.—Everything was now ready for taking possession of their new home, provided the people had the necessary faith and courage. Accordingly, as we learn from his own account in Deuteronomy (1: 20, 21), Moses commanded them in the name of Jehovah to go up and take possession of the land. They had only to trust God and go forward, and in less than two years from leaving Egypt the land would have been theirs. The God who had delivered them with a mighty hand, who had made a path through the sea, who had rained manna, and brought water from a rock, and spoken from Sinai, and entered into covenant with them, and was leading them by his visible presence, — he bade them go up and take possession of the promised land. They should have trusted and obeyed.

III. The Exploring Expedition.—Vs. 17-25. The people, however, were afraid to go forward. They were not a warlike people. Abraham's attack on Chedorlaomer and his army in rescue of Lot, in the far distant past, and their battle with the Amalekites, a year before this time, are the only battles recorded in the whole history of their race. The whole people (Deut. 1: 22) asked Moses to first send out spies to investigate. This was wise under the circumstances, that is, the next wisest thing to going forward trusting in God, and therefore pleased Moses (Deut. 1: 23), and it was so directed by God (Num. 13: 12).

Accordingly, Moses selected twelve leading men best fitted for the service, whose names are given in verses 4-15.

THE OBJECT of this expedition was (1) to learn what were the attractions of the country; (2) the difficulties in the way of taking possession; (3) the best ways of reaching the country; (4) the preparations it was necessary to make.

17. Get ye up this way southward. Better as in R.V., by the *south*, not referring at all to the direction from the Israelites' camp, but to a well-defined tract of territory forming the southernmost and least fertile portion of the land of Canaan. It was called "The *Negeb*" or The South Country, literally, "the dryness." In the same way we speak of the "The South," no matter in what direction we approach it, or of South Boston, or Southern Illinois. Into the mountain, the mountainous region.

19. Whether in tents (*i.e.*, open villages and camps), **or in strong holds**: walled cities and strongholds.

20. And what the land *is*, whether it *be* ¹ fat or lean, whether there be wood therein, or not. And ² *be* ye of good courage, and bring of the fruit of the land. Now the time *was* the time of the first ripe grapes.

23. ³ And they came unto the ⁴ brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it ⁵ between two upon a staff; ⁶ and *they brought* of the pomegranates, and of the figs.

24. ⁷ The place was called the ⁸ brook Eshcol, because of the cluster ⁹ of grapes which the children of Israel cut down from thence.

25. And they returned from ¹⁰ searching of the land after forty days.

26. And they went and came to Moses, and to Aaron, and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, ¹¹ unto the wilderness of Paran, to ¹² Kadesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land.

27. And they told him, and said, We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with ¹³ milk and honey; ¹⁴ and this *is* the fruit of it.

¹ Neh. 9: 25, 35. Ezek. 34: 14.

² Deut. 31: 6, 7, 23.

³ Deut. 1: 24, 25.

⁴ Num. 13: 3.

⁵ Num. 20: 1, 16; 32: 8; Rev. Ver.: *e* valley.

⁶ Josh. 14: 6.

⁷ Ex. 3: 8; 33: 3.

⁸ Deut. 1: 25.

i valley of.

f upon a staff *g* omit of grapes.

h between two. *k* spying out the

l they brought *m* and at the end

also. *n* That. of forty.

20. The time of the first ripe grapes. In Palestine this occurs in July and August. The spies went the whole length of the land, to the base of the Lebanon Mountains (v. 21).

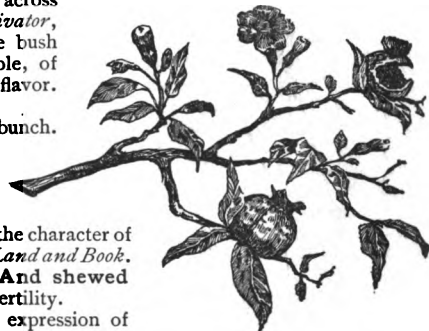
23. And they came, on their return, unto the brook Eshcol, the rich valley immediately to the north of Hebron; described by Robinson as producing the largest and best grapes in all Palestine, besides pomegranates, figs, apricots, quinces, and other fruits in abundance. — *Cook*. One cluster of grapes, and . . . bare it between two upon a staff. Single clusters are mentioned weighing ten or twelve pounds. Tobler speaks of individual grapes as large as plums. Kitto (*Phys. Hist. of Palestine*, p. 330) states that a bunch of grapes of enormous size was produced at Welbeck from a Syrian vine, and sent as a present in 1819 from the Duke of Portland to the Marquis of Rockingham. It weighed nineteen pounds, and was conveyed to its destination, more than twenty miles distant, on a staff by four laborers, two of whom bore it in rotation. — *Cook*. The arrangement referred to in the text was probably made, not because the weight was too great for one person to carry, but in order to prevent the grapes from being crushed. — *Ellicott*. In 1845, Dr. Mitchell, of Philadelphia, grew a cluster of grapes that was two feet four and five eighths inches in length and three feet across the shoulders or wings. The vine was only three years of age. Have we any record of a larger bunch? — *Massachusetts Ploughman*. The heaviest bunch of black grapes that has ever been recorded weighed twenty-three pounds, five ounces; length, twenty-four inches; and width across the shoulders, twenty-two inches. — *Boston Cultivator*, 1881. Pomegranates: "grained apple"; a large bush of the myrtle family, bearing a fruit like a large apple, of beautiful brown-red color, and of a highly grateful flavor. The juice was used as a cooling drink.

24. Called the brook Eshcol, that is, a cluster, a bunch.

25. And they returned. The Egyptian records show that there was then frequent communication between Egypt and Syria. This enables us to understand how it was possible for twelve Hebrews to spy out the land without interruption. They had simply to assume the character of Egyptians, from which country they had lately come. — *Land and Book*.

IV. The Facts Reported. — Vs. 26-29. 26. And shewed them the fruit of the land, as visible proof of its fertility.

27. Floweth with milk and honey; a poetic expression of the luxuriance and richness of its productions.



Pomegranate.

28. ¹ Nevertheless ¹ the people ^m be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities ^{are} ^a walled, and very great: and moreover we saw ² the children of Anak there.

29. ³ The Amalekites dwell in the land of the south: and the ^p Hittites, and the ^q Jebusites, and the ^r Amorites, dwell in the mountains: and the ^s Canaanites dwell by the sea, and ^t by the coast of Jordan.

30. And ⁴ Caleb stilled the people before Moses, and said, Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it.

¹ Deut. 1: 28; 9: 1, 2.

² Num. 13: 33.

Rev. Ver.: / Howbeit.

^p Hittite.

³ Ex. 17: 8. Num. 14: 43. Judg. 6: 3.

^m that dwell in the land

^q Jebusite.

^r Sam. 14: 48; 15: 3.

ⁿ are strong.

^r Amorite.

⁴ Num. 14: 6, 24. Josh. 14: 7.

ⁿ fenced.

^s Canaanite dwelleth.

^o Amalek dwelleth.

^t along by the side of.

28. Nevertheless the people be strong. They were large, active, and trained to war. They seemed not only strong, but stronger than the Israelites (v. 31). They were of great stature (v. 32). The cities are walled: large and well fortified, and the Israelites had no means of warfare with which to capture them. "The walled cities of Canaan were not easily taken by the armies of Egypt, in the campaigns of Thotmes III., of Setee I., and of Rameses II., prior to the days of the exodus. On the walls of Karnak there are pictured representations of the conflicts for the possession of some of those walled cities of Canaan, which show that their conquest was no slight matter, even for the strongest empire of the then known world. The Israelites knew something of such defences from their experiences and observations in Egypt. They had themselves been the builders of walls of fortification, which were deemed impregnable to any hostile force. It is not to be wondered at that they felt incompetent to the capture of walled cities with giant defenders of the walls." — *Sunday-School Times*. We saw the children of Anak there. In verse 33 they are called giants, in whose presence the spies seemed like grasshoppers. "It is probable the Anakim were a distinguished family, or perhaps a select body of warriors, chosen for their extraordinary size." — *J. F. and B.*

Fertility.

Walled Cities.

Giants.

29. Amalekites: who dwell on the borders of the "south country," and who had already attacked them once (Ex. 17: 8-16). These were the first enemies to be overcome. The Hittites: a great, a warlike nation, whose remains have lately been discovered. They extend over a wide reach of country. The Jebusites. These held the region about Jerusalem. They were the most formidable of all the native population. — *Bush*. They held the citadel of Jerusalem even till the time of David. The Amorites: mountaineers. Of the Amorites, we find the Lord saying through the prophet Amos (2: 9), "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks." — *Bush*. Canaanites: lowlanders. Coast: borders.

The Inhabitants.

V. The Minority Report. — V. 30; 14: 6-10, 30, 38; Deut. 1: 29-31, 36-38. On the above facts, concerning which there was no difference of opinion, there were two reports made.

30. And Caleb, with Joshua (14: 6), stilled the people, who grew restless and excited as the difficulties in the way were presented, enforced by the assurance of the other ten spies that they could not take possession of the land. Let us go up at once, . . . for we are well able to overcome it, "for the Lord is with us." This report was good (1) because it took the facts as they were, seeing both the value of the land and the difficulties in the way of possession. It looked not only on the bright side, nor only on the dark side, but on both sides. (2) Because it was a report of faith. It remembered God's promises. It took account of what God had already done in Egypt, and at the Red Sea, and at Sinai, and how he had delivered them out of far greater dangers than any now before them. What God had done proved what God could and would do. So David was assured that he could overcome Goliath, because God had before enabled him to overcome a lion and a bear. (3) It was a good report because it threw their whole personal influence on the side of faith and courage and hope and religion and God.

The Good Report.

THEIR DANGER. These two heroes had to withstand the whole tide of excited feeling and fear that made the people weep all night, and prepare to rebel against Moses, choose

31. ¹ But the men that went up with him said, We be not able to go up against the people; for they *are* stronger than we.

32. And they ² brought up an evil report of the land which they had ^u searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to ^v search it, *is* a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and ³ all the people that we saw in it *are* men of ^w a great stature.

33. And there we saw the ^xgiants, the ⁴ sons of Anak, *which come* of the ⁵giants: and we were in our own sight ⁵ as grasshoppers, and so we were ⁶ in their sight.

¹ Num. 32: 9. Deut. 1: 28. Josh. 14: 8.

⁴ Deut. 1: 28; 2: 10; 9: 2.

Rev. Ver.: *u* spied out.

² Num. 14: 36, 37.

³ Amos 2: 9.

⁵ Isa. 40: 22.

⁶ 1 Sam. 17: 42.

v spy it out. *w* omit a. *x* Nephilim.

new leaders, and return to bondage in Egypt. The people tried to stone them to death, and were prevented only by the glory of the Lord shining forth from the tabernacle.

THEIR REWARD. Caleb and Joshua both lived to enter the promised land. Caleb received as his possession Hebron, the very place he searched as a spy, where were the best fruits and the strongest enemies. Joshua had his name changed from Oshea, a prayer, "the Lord save," to Jehoshua, "the Lord saves."

VI. The Majority Report.—Vs. 31-33. The other ten said, **We be not able to go up against the people for they are stronger than we.** But God was stronger than their enemies. Why did they not remember his deliverance from the far mightier arm of Pharaoh?

32. **A land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof.** Either (1) a land of scarcity, unable to support its inhabitants; or (2) an unhealthy land, where the people are consumed by pestilence, or (3) full of strife, and discord, and war among the tribes contending for supremacy within it.

33. **Giants, and we were in their sight as grasshoppers,** so greatly did their faithless fears distort the facts.

This was an *evil report* (v. 32). (1) Because they laid emphasis on the dangers and obstacles, and minimized the good. Their fears exaggerated and distorted the facts, so as to give a false impression. (2) Because it was the fruit of unbelief. It left God and his promises out of the account, and yet this was the largest factor. "They occupied themselves with their difficulties instead of God and his resources." Hence their report is called "a slander upon the land" (Num. 14: 36). It was like leaving steam out of the account in considering an engine, or electricity in *The Evil Report*, measuring the power of an electric light or motor. (3) They threw all their personal influence on the side of fear and discouragement. For who would seem to be as good judges of what was possible as those who had been through the land? (4) Those who discourage others impart weakness and failure. "Nothing is so paralyzing as despondency and distrust. It is faith that overcomes the world and removes mountains."—*Professor Green*.

THE RESULT was that the people refused to go and take possession of their land. They rebelled, and were on the verge of destruction. They would have perished as a nation but for the prayers of those whom they rejected. The ten spies were smitten with the plague and died. Every person over twenty years of age must die before the nation could enter Canaan, and the people must endure a forty-years' discipline in the wilderness. Only the two faithful spies, of all the people, should see the land of promise and realize their long cherished hopes.

A SPASM OF FALSE REPENTANCE. A few days later, ashamed of their cowardice, and stung by their punishment for it, they determined to go up and conquer the Canaanites, contrary to God's command, and without his presence; the very thing they had not faith to do with his command and his almighty power. And they suffered a disgraceful defeat (Num. 14: 40-45). How often men refuse to do God's will, and then think to make all right by doing something else they think to be good.

MODERN APPLICATIONS.

1. There are frequently different reports based on the same facts. "A very accurate report may be very one sided. An unvarnished account of the real state of the case, in which there is not a single misstatement nor exaggeration, may be utterly false by reason

of wrong perspective and omission." — *Maclaren*. From the same Bible men derive different doctrines; from the same facts of science, different theories and results. There are often unrecognized factors; often, differing emphasis on the facts. It is our duty and privilege to receive all the facts as fast as proved, but not hastily to accept even the popular inferences from these facts, as in the case of Bible doctrines, higher criticism, the Bible and science, etc.

2. Those who stem the popular tide must expect to be unpopular for a time. Radicals will be called heretics and destructives, and conservatives will be called "back numbers" and "last year's almanacs." But the real truth, wherever it stands, will be successful at last, and receive the inheritance.

"If only we strive to be pure and true,
To each of us there will come an hour
When the tree of life shall burst into flower,
And rain at our feet the glorious dower
Of something grander than ever we knew."

3. Most people can do more than they think they can in the service of God. The enemies of good are many and great; like giants, entrenched in the walled cities of wealth, and custom, and popular feeling, such as heathenism, intemperance, corruption, oppression, selfishness, ignorance. It seems impossible to overcome them. Man cannot overcome them alone. But with God's help we can attack them boldly and conquer them. Faith and courage can do wonders. Without these we must wander the forty years in the wilderness.

"Oh, how many a glorious record
Had the angels of me kept,

Had I done instead of doubted,
Had I warred instead of wept."

4. Every real good, like success, education, usefulness, has great difficulties and many enemies in the way, but also sends forward, to those seeking, specimens of its grapes of Eshcol and blessed fruits.

5. REPORTS FROM CHRISTIAN EXPLORERS. (1) God is leading us toward the promised land of holiness and heavenly blessedness. (2) We are commanded to go up and possess the land now, and not wait for a long and dreary journey through the wilderness of sin. (3) It is unbelief, — the lack of courage which comes from the lack of faith, — that delays our going to the promised land. (4) Every Christian has explored the land and brings back some kind of report as to what the land is. (5) He brings these reports by what he says and by what he does. He brings to the world clusters of the fruits. (6) The true Christian life is a land of promise and of fulfilment; a land with the great clusters of Eshcol, rich, luscious, and abundant fruits, — heavenly experiences, love, joy, peace, faith, long-suffering, charity, and every good. (7) But there are difficulties in the way of obtaining these blessings, — giants of evil, of passion, of selfishness, of intemperance; enemies entrenched in walled cities of custom, prejudice, sinful hearts, wealth, fashion. (8) Those make a good report who see these enemies as well as the blessedness of the land, but also see the power and the love of God which can give strength to overcome them, and who prove that the enemies can be overcome by overcoming them; and who also show by their holy lives, and deeds of love, how good the land is. (9) Those make an evil report who see the enemies more clearly than the goodness of the land, and than the power and love of God; who magnify the evils and belittle the blessings; who have little faith in God, and forget all his wondrous works in the past; and who, by their sinful and imperfect lives and ceaseless complaints, declare that God cannot conquer evil for them. (10) Those who bring a good report to the world are blessed by inheriting the very blessings of which they have had a foretaste. (11) Those who bring an evil report are punished by being excluded from that land of blessings which they had not faith to conquer. (12) God gives us foretastes of the blessedness of heaven to encourage us on our way.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Trumbull's *Kadesh Barnea* settles the location of Kadesh, and gives much valuable and interesting information; the *Century Magazine* for December, 1888, contains a very interesting article, "From Sinai to Shechem," which bears on this subject. *The Land and the Book*, new ed., Vol. I., on vineyards, grapes, pp. 277-279; pomegranates, p. 284; giants, 250-252; Vol. III., p. 301, on why the spies were permitted to pass unmolested. C. Robinson's *Memorial Pulpit*, Vol. I., "Faith and Failure," contains many things both practical and illustrative. Roberts' *Oriental Illustrations*; Palmer's *Desert of the Exodus*; Edersheim's *Wanderings in the Wilderness*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Include, in teaching, the whole section and parallel account.

SUBJECT: REPORTS FROM THE CHRISTIAN'S PROMISED LAND.

I. THE EXPLORATION (vs. 17-25).

Illustration. SPIES IN PALESTINE. On the walls of the temple of Karnak, in Upper Egypt, there is a record of a campaign of Thotmes III. into Canaan, a long while prior to the days of Moses. That record tells of the formal report made to the king of Egypt by "the spies" whom the king had sent out in advance to gain information as to the location and defences of the enemy. This is an incidental illustration of the historic accuracy of the Bible narrative, which tells of this plan of securing information by Moses and Joshua, who were trained in the methods of Egyptian warfare. — *Sunday-School Times*.

II. THE REPORTS OF THE SPIES (vs. 26-33).

Illustration. Two ways of looking at the same things. People often look at the good through the small end of the telescope, and the evil through the large end, diminishing the good as they enlarge the evil.

Illustrations. Ruskin says that people see not what is, but what they are looking for. So an artist, a manufacturer, or a scientific man, looking at Niagara Falls, may notice particularly very different things.

Illustrations. (1) Every man makes his own rainbow, because he stands at a different center of rays. (2) The same mountain appears differently from different points of view. (3) Several persons looking from a room with stained glass windows see the same scene with very different impressions.

Illustration. Mr. Spurgeon tells a story of a man who was invited to come into an orchard and eat some of the fruit. He refused, for he said that he had picked up some of the apples by the roadside that fell from those trees, and they were poor and bitter. The owner replied that those trees were placed there on purpose, so that the boys would ~~not~~ be attracted into the orchard to steal. But come inside, and there the apples are delicious.

Thus some Christians, by murmuring, by disagreeable manner, by unpleasant habits, by conduct bordering on the wrong, make an evil report of what is really the Christian life. So also there are those who notice only the false professors and the faults of true professors, and hence refuse to become Christians.

Illustration. Professor Proctor, in his *Familiar Science Studies*, tells of an Oriental monarch who dreamed that he had lost all his teeth. He applied to one of his wise men for an interpretation, who said that the dream foretold that all his relatives would die, one by one, before he did, and the king slew the interpreter for his bad report. The next wise-man interpreted the dream to mean that the king would outlive all his relations, and this man was exalted to the highest place in the kingdom. There are these two ways of looking at almost all subjects; one way is life and hope, the other is doubt, discouragement, and failure.

Illustration. The first time I went to the top of Mount Washington, the mist and rain compelled us to gather around the fire in the Tiptop House, and look over photographs of the views, instead of the scenery itself; when a stranger called my attention to a picture of the railroad train ascending the steep sides of the mountain, and gave me these facts. The artist had tipped his camera to make the ascent seem steeper than it really was, because the steeper the appearance, the greater the sale. A young clergyman reproved him for the deception, saying that every picture was a lie. The artist replied by offering to give him the picture which best expressed his *feelings* while riding in the car up the mountain; and he chose the one which showed the steepest grade. The facts were one thing; the feelings another. This was true of the Israelites on this occasion. It is often true in our own experience; and getting at the exact facts will often cure the exaggerated feelings. A few dishonest clerks give the impression that all are dishonest. A few bad church members give a false impression of the whole church, so that one good man printed that "the prisons are full of fallen Sabbath-school superintendents and church members"; while the records show that such people are very rare, and that most prisoners are young and untrained.

III. THE FRUITS OF UNBELIEF.—People refuse to go to heaven because they do not believe in their hearts that it is worth the cost. They refuse to accept Jesus and the Christian life, which is heaven begun below, because they do not believe that it is really as good as Christians report, but do believe in the sinful pleasures which keep them from the promised land.

LESSON VI. — AUGUST 11.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT. — NUMBERS 21: 4-9.

Golden Text. — *As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.* — JOHN 3: 14.

THE SECTION includes Numbers 16, 17, 20, and 21: 1-9, and Deuteronomy 1: 46; 2: 1; 8: 1-5.

TIME. — The punishment by the serpents occurred in September, B. C. 1452 (Usher), thirty-nine years and six months after the exodus. Aaron died on the first day of the fifth month (July—August) of the fortieth year after the Israelites left Egypt (Num. 33: 39); and they mourned for him thirty days before they started from Mount Hor, the latter part of August, and this event occurred not long after.

PLACE. — The serpents attacked the people in the southern part of the valley of Arabah, which extends from the Dead Sea to the head of the Gulf of Akabah or eastern branch of the Red Sea. Through this valley was probably once the outlet of the Jordan and Dead Sea.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Akābāh', Ar'ābāh, Bēer'shēbā, or Bēershē'bā, E'dōm, Hōr (o as in for), Id'ūmē'ā, Kā'dēsh Bār'nēā, Mīr'īām.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Forty Years of Discipline. — In our last lesson the Israelites had arrived at Kadesh Barnea, within forty miles of Beersheba, the first large place in Southern Palestine. Here they remained more than thirty-eight years, the long time of Deuteronomy 1: 46. They arrived at Kadesh about a year and three months after the exodus, and left it nine months before taking possession of Canaan. During these years "Kadesh was probably their central nucleus or rendezvous. They would naturally change their locality from time to time, like the Bedouins of all ages, but still cherishing the hope of eventually becoming possessors of the land of promise. Meantime they are not to be conceived as dwelling, in their intervals of repose, in a compact camp, which the nature of the country forbade to such an immense multitude, amounting to over 2,000,000, but as expatiating in bands, here and there, over the adjacent country, still having the tabernacle as the center and the rendezvous to which they would return." — *Bush*. Some of these wanderings are given in Numbers 33: 19-36, extending as far south as Ezion Geber on the eastern arm of the Red Sea (1 Kings 9: 26).

SOME OF THE CHIEF EVENTS. 1. *Korah's rebellion*, chapter 16. Korah and 250 princes rose up in rebellion against Moses, apparently from envy. They took advantage of the murmuring of the people at the long delay in coming to the promised land. Korah and his two friends were swallowed up by an earthquake, and fire and plague destroyed many of the rebellious murmurers.

2. *Aaron's rod budded*, chapter 17, to prove that Aaron was the divinely chosen high priest.

3. *The death of Miriam*, the sister of Moses (20: 1).

4. *Water from the rock* at Meribah and the sin of Moses that kept him from entering the promised land (20: 2-13).

5. *The death of Aaron* at Mount Hor (20: 22-29).

THE REASONS FOR THE LONG DELAY. The reason is given by Moses in Deuteronomy 8: 2. It was "to humble thee, and prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldst keep his commandments or no." The people had shown by their conduct, and especially in reference to the reports of the spies, that they were not fit to take possession of their promised land, nor to use it aright if they did gain possession. They were prepared for their future by a long course of varied discipline. (1) They had great mercies and helps, — the tabernacle, regular worship and religious instruction, the daily manna, water from the rock, the guiding pillar, the Shekinah over the tabernacle whence God spoke, the written law, noble leaders. All these things are a part of the discipline. God does everything to help his people. (2) They had some great trials, — they had times of hunger and thirst; sickness and death were among them; severe punishment for rebellion; long and tedious delays, for it would have been as easy to reach Canaan in forty weeks as in forty years.

4. And ¹ they journeyed from Mount Hor by the way * of the Red Sea, to ² compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way.

¹ Num. 20: 22; 33: 41.

² Judg. 11: 18.

Rev. Ver.: a to.

All these things were both a probation and an education. All this time God "bare them as a nursing-father in the wilderness" (Acts 13: 18, margin of R. V.). The people were treated and trained as little children.

All their misfortunes and their long delay were the fruit of unbelief (Heb. 3: 19). They would not trust God. "Some one has said that it takes God much longer to prepare us for a blessing than it does to give it when we are ready to receive it."—*Sarah Smiley*.

OUR LIVES are like this forty years in the wilderness. The life of sin is like the Egyptian bondage. The exodus is like the new birth. That is but the beginning of the Christian life. We are pressing on to the promised land of a perfect life. We are not yet fit for heaven. God gives us helps and mercies as many and as bright as the stars. He leads us in strange ways. He sends trials. By all these things he is training and preparing us with loving care for our eternal home. "Our very struggle is prophetic of its final victory. The very imperfections speak the promise that God will make them perfect. Our shame and horror of evil are a pledge of robes to be one day washed white. The day is coming when we shall have conquered our last temptation, and be delivered from our last sin."—*T. H. Darlow in Expositor*.

II. **The People Lose Faith in God.**—Vs. 4, 5. 4. And they journeyed, after the death of Aaron. They were now fairly started on the way to Canaan. From Mount Hor. A conspicuous mountain half way between the Dead Sea and the eastern arm of the Red Sea. It is 4,800 feet above the Mediterranean. By the way of the Red Sea. That is the Gulf of Akabah, the eastern arm of the Red Sea. "This sea is called by the Greeks Red from its beach, red with red sand and gravel, and the fragments of red coral which are forever being thrown up from the stores below; and it is these coralline forests which form the true 'weeds,' from which it is named by the Hebrews the *Sea of Weeds*."—*Stanley's Sinai and Palestine*. To compass, or go around, Edom. The country of the Edomites, the descendants of Esau. Edom, like Esau, means red. "The modern name of the country is *Idumea*, the Greek form of the Hebrew Edom." This mountainous region, called Mount Seir, extended from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah, along the eastern border of the Arabah. The children of Israel went around this region, a long distance out of their way, because the Edomites would not permit them to cross over their country (20: 14-21), and opposed them with a strong force, and God forbade them to fight their way, for the Edomites were their brethren (Deut. 2: 4, 5). And the soul of the people was much discouraged by the way. They lost courage, and hope, and faith, for (1) they were travelling directly away from the promised land. "Hope deferred made the heart sick." (2) The way itself was very difficult. Water was scarce. The way was rough; "an expanse of shifting sands, of which the surface is broken by innumerable undulations and low hills."—*Kitto*. "It is troubled by sand storms from the shore of the gulf."—*Rev. T. E. Espin*. (3) They were exposed to enemies from the highlands of Mount Seir, who at any time might make raids upon them from the hills (20: 18, 20). (4) Some of their leaders **Discouragements**. had died, and Moses was growing old. (5) They were tired of the sameness of their food (v. 5). These dangers and



Bit of the Red Sea.

5. And the people ¹ spake against God, and against Moses, ² Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is* no bread, ^b neither *is there* any water; and ³ our soul loatheth this light bread.

6. And ⁴ the LORD sent ⁵ fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died.

¹ Psa. 78: 19.² Num. 11: 6.³ 1 Cor. 10: 9.⁴ Deut. 8: 15.Rev. Ver.: *b* and there is no.⁵ Ex. 16: 3; 17: 3.

discomforts reacted upon their spirits. They only faintly discerned God's providence and his everlasting mercies.

"A finger's breadth at hand can mar
A world of light in heaven afar,
A mote eclipse a glorious star."

5. And the people spake against God, and against Moses. Their bitter feelings grew so strong that they were expressed in words. Their former murmurings at Kadesh had been treated leniently, and water had been supplied, apparently at their angry demand. They seem not to have interpreted the miracle there as an instance of mercy in spite of their wicked course, but as a response to it; and they therefore now repeated the experiment of insurrection. Thus men still "turn the grace of God into lasciviousness," "not knowing that the long-suffering of God leads them to repentance." The murmurs of the people are represented in 1 Corinthians 10: 9 as a tempting of Christ.—*Franklin Johnson*. **Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt.** The greatest blessings God had wrought for them, the very keeping of his promises, are complained of as if they were evils done to the people. **This light bread, i. e.,** vile, worthless, contemptible. Thus they spake of the manna from heaven, without which they would have perished. So the very commonness of God's daily mercies, the very *Murmurings*, frequency of God's gifts of daily spiritual food, of prayer, and worship, and his Word, often prevents us from realizing their value. The dawn of morning after the night is scarcely noticed, while, if it came but once, it would outweigh in value all the world.

Thus the Israelites tempted God (1 Cor. 10: 9; Heb. 3: 9). They put his patience and forbearance to the test, and did all they could to make him give them up as hopeless.

All these things were the fruit of unbelief. They would not trust in God, though they had ten thousand proofs that he was worthy of their trust. Faith would have made all things bright, or shown the silver lining behind the clouds, and given them patience to wait for the breaking through of the light. Their unbelief led them into sin. Unbelief is not chiefly disbelieving any particular creed, but such a distrust of God—of his law, his rewards, his providence, his teachings—as leads to disobedience and sin.

III. **The Punishment of Unbelief.**—V. 6. And the Lord sent, by providential guidance. The serpents were not probably created for this occasion. The punishment came from God by use of natural means, as is usual. Note the plagues of Pharaoh and the burning of Sodom. The obstinacy of the people may have led them to run into the serpent-infested places. **Fiery serpents.** "Literally, burning serpents, so called from the inflammatory nature of their bite, which infuses a burning deadly poison, as the Greeks also name certain serpents, especially the *dipsas*, because its poison wrought like burning fire."—*Keil*. Thus causing intense thirst, Greek, *dipsa*. They were so called from the fiery red color of the serpents.—*Lange*. In the afternoon a large and very mottled snake was brought to us, marked with fiery spots and spiral lines, which evidently belonged, from the formation of its teeth, to one of the most poisonous species. The Bedouins say that those snakes, of which they have great dread, are very numerous in this locality.—*Schuberl's Travels*. The peninsula of Sinai, and not *Fiery Serpents*, least the Arabah, abounds in mottled snakes of large size, marked with fiery red spots and wavy stripes, which belong to the most poisonous species, as the formation of the teeth clearly shows.—*Cook*.

In Sir Risdon Bennett's *Diseases of the Bible* is a suggestion that the fiery serpent was the Guinea worm, *Filaria Medinensis*, a thread-like worm from four inches to four feet in length, and about a tenth of an inch broad, which abounds in many parts of the East, including the Arabian Peninsula, and sometimes assumes an epidemic character. It enters the body through the feet and legs, but more especially through infected drinking water. It produces burning inflammation. Of 3,500 to 4,000 Turkish soldiers in Arabia, in 1877, no

7. ¹ Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, ⁴ for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; ² pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people.

8. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a ^a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he ¹ looketh upon it, shall live.

9. And ³ Moses made a serpent of brass, and ⁵ put it upon a pole; and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he ^h beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

¹ Psa. 78: 34.² Ex. 8: 8, 28.³ Sam. 12: 19.Rev. Ver.: ^c And the.^f seeth it.¹ Kings 13: 6.

Acts 8: 24.

^d because.^g set it upon the standard.³ 2 Kings 18: 4.

John 3: 14, 15.

^e standard.^h looked unto.

less than 2,500 were attacked by these worms, averaging four to each man, while some had ten, twenty, or thirty, or more. The exhausted soldiers on the march got them from drinking of the stagnant pools. It is possible that the Israelites, suffering from drought, seized on any water, however foul, and thus became infested with these *filaria*.

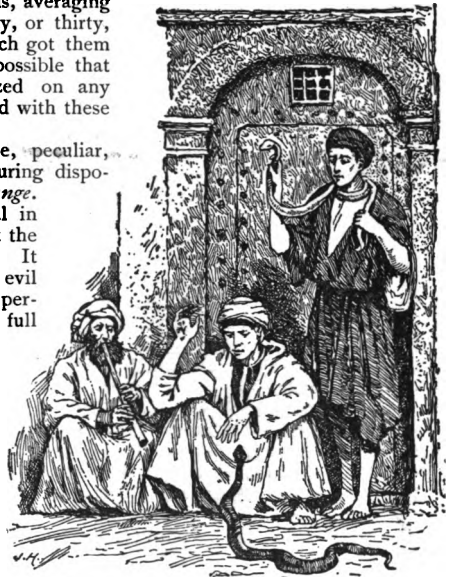
FIERY SERPENTS OF SIN. "The true, peculiar, pernicious, fiery serpents were their murmuring disposition and complaints against Jehovah." — *Lange*. Sin is like a fiery serpent, often beautiful in appearance, and secret in its approach. But the effects are pains that only fire can express. It infects the whole system. It inflames every evil passion. It is incurable by man alone. If permitted to go on, it is death. The world is full to-day of the sorrows, the burning remorse, the agonies of the body and of the spirit which come from the fiery serpents of sin. Compare the old serpent, the Devil, the tempter and destroyer of men.

IV. Repentance. — V. 7. **We have sinned.** The evil effects of sin made them feel conscious of their sin and its greatness. The real evil is the sin, and not the punishment. But it is only by the punishment that men realize the evil of sin itself. We cannot help measuring the judgment of any people as to the evil of sin by the severity or lightness of the punishment they inflict on various sins. And the only way in which God can impress upon men the awful evil of sin is by his terrible punishment. Therefore he shows us hell. **Moses prayed.** The first source of help for sinners is prayer. But we note in what a peculiar and yet blessed way the prayer was answered; not by removing the serpents, as they probably expected, but by a way that healed their souls as well as their bodies. So Paul's "thorn in the flesh."

Mr. Parton, in the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, 1877, in giving an account of inebriate asylums, states the principles which must lie at the basis of reformation. (1) Men of the better class will not go there at all till they have tried to reform and failed enough times to know that they cannot save themselves. (2) There is no hope for them except by so complete a repentance that they totally abstain from strong drink.

V. The Means of Restoring Faith. — Vs. 8, 9. As the sin and punishment of the Israelites were the fruits of unbelief, the true method of help was first to restore faith and then healing.

8. Make thee a fiery serpent, of brass, verse 9, that is, of copper or bronze, which the word usually means. **And set it upon a pole,** or standard, so that all who were bitten



Snake Charmers of the East.

could easily see it. It was conspicuous all over the camp. "As to its being put upon an actual cross, the word rendered "pole" means standard, such as was used in war or on the march. Often their shape was something like a cross; at least, the object on the pole was a fixed one, of some solid substance, and not, as with us, a flying or fluttering flag. But the word "cross," with respect to ancient punishments, means more than that which we now call a cross. To hang or fasten the serpent on a simple pole would have been to crucify it." —

Prof. I. H. Hall. **Every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.** (1) The power of healing was not in the brazen serpent. "It could no more heal them than it could sting them." Had the means of cure been a merely natural remedy, the people would have trusted in that instead of in God. (2) The condition of healing was a test of their faith, and thus led them to trust in God. It is easy to imagine how it would seem useless for them merely to look at a piece of brass. (3) The power was wholly in God. This was what made the means effective. (4) The healing of their bodies in this way was a healing of their unbelief and a removal of the cause of their sin.

THE BRAZEN SERPENT AN ILLUSTRATION OF CHRIST. (1) Its design was the same, to save suffering, sinful, dying men. (2) It was made in the form of the fiery serpents, but was itself perfectly harmless. So Christ was made sin for us, took the form of our sinful human nature, was subject to human conditions, yet without sin. (3) Like the serpent, Christ was lifted up upon the cross to draw all men unto him. Christ crucified is the most conspicuous object in the history of the world. It is the center around which the whole moral and religious warfare of the world is gathered. It is the Alcyone around which all the stars of heaven are circling. So that both by enemies and friends the cross is made prominent, and all may hear of the Saviour. (4) The power of healing was not in the serpent, but in God through the serpent. The cross has no power in itself, but God has there shown his infinite love and power for salvation.

THE METHOD OF SALVATION, BY FAITH. (1) The people felt their need. (2) They repented of their sins; no one can be saved without repentance. (3) They had faith to seek and look upon the brazen serpent and be healed, as now all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ shall be saved. Salvation was by a moral act. It would have been far easier to have cured their bodily pains by a direct act, but the moral result was by far the most important. (4) This faith that God requires is not an arbitrary, but a necessary condition of salvation. For (a) if men do not believe Christ they will not obey his instructions about heaven and the way there. (b) Faith is the test of obedience. Christ is the sum of God's character; and the test is whether we will obey *all* God's commandments, and not merely such as we may choose. (c) Faith in Christ is a test of our loyalty to God and his kingdom. It is the choosing God, not only as our Saviour, but our King. (d) Faith in Christ draws us close to him in love as our Leader and Friend. (e) Faith is the act of receiving God into the soul. (f) Faith awakens every nobler motive of the soul, — love for him who has done so much for us; duty, revealed in him who died in doing his duty; hope of like holiness and blessedness; love to men, exemplified on the cross.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Commentaries on Numbers, and on John 3: 14, 15; the *Expositor's Bible* on this text (by Marcus Dods) is especially good. Walker's *Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation* on faith and its necessity; *Sermons* by Finney, Moody; *Moses the Lawgiver*, by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor, chapter 22. On the fiery serpents, see Sir Bennett Risdon's *Diseases of the Bible* (Vol. IX. of *By-paths of Bible Knowledge*, \$1.25); and Strabo 15: 723; 16: 759. On the region of Akabah and Mount Hor, see Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*, 83-98. On these and on Edom and the South country, see Palmer's *Desert of the Exodus*, 294, 361.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

THE MAP. Trace out the journeyings of the Israelites, thus explaining one reason of their discontent.

THE FORTY YEARS. This long period of history in the wilderness and its meaning as a discipline should be noted.

SUBJECT: RUIN BY UNBELIEF, REDEMPTION BY FAITH.

I. SIN THROUGH UNBELIEF. — Vs. 4, 5.

Illustration. A regiment was ordered to attack by night a certain well-guarded point.

The march was over rough roads, but, though each man felt that he was going to certain death, all kept on silently and resolutely. Unexpectedly the order to advance was countermanded. On the way back, though all felt that they had been delivered from death, the mouths of most were filled with murmuring and profanity over the badness of the roads. So the children of Israel, after their great deliverance, murmured on their way round about Edom. — *Sunday-School Times*.

Illustration. LOSS OF FAITH.

Upon the white sea sand
There sat a pilgrim band,
Telling the losses which their lives had known,
While evening waned away
From breezy cliff and bay,
And the strong tides went out with weary moan.

One spake with quivering lip
Of a fair freighted ship,
With all his household to the deep gone down.
But one had wilder woe,
For a fair face long ago,
Lost in the darker depths of a great town.

There were some who mourned their youth
With a most loving truth,
For its brave hopes and memories ever green;
And one upon the West
Turned an eye that would not rest,
For far-off hills whereon its joy had been.

Some talked of vanished gold,
Some of proud honors told,
Some spake of friends that were their trust no more;
And one of a green grave,
Beside a foreign wave,
That made him sit so lonely on the shore.

But when their tales were done,
There spake among them one,
A stranger, seeming from all sorrow free:
"Sad losses have ye met,
But mine is heavier yet,
For a believing heart hath gone from me."

"Alas!" these pilgrims said,
"For the living and the dead,
For fortune's cruelty, for love's sure cross,
For the wreck of land and sea,
But however it came to thee—
Thine, stranger, is life's last and heaviest loss."
— *Frances Brown*.

II. THE FRUITS OF SIN (v. 6).

Illustration. From the earliest times the serpent had been regarded as man's most dangerous enemy, — more subtle than any beast of the field, more sudden and stealthy in its attack, and more certainly fatal. The natural revulsion which men feel in its presence and their inability to cope with it seemed to fit it to be the natural representative of the powers of spiritual evil. And yet, strangely enough, in the very countries in which it was recognized as the symbol of all that is deadly it was also recognized as the symbol of life. And as it was early discovered that the most valuable medicines are poisons, the serpent, as the very "personification of poison," was looked upon as not only the symbol of all that is deadly, but also of all that is health-giving. And so it has continued to be, even to our own days, the recognized symbol of the healing art, and, wreathed round a staff, as Moses had it, it may still be seen sculptured on our own hospitals and schools of medicine.

Illustration. SERPENT'S EGGS. "A friend of mine, some years ago, received a letter from a missionary on the west coast of Africa, in which, as a curiosity, some serpent-eggs were contained. He laid them carefully aside, thinking to preserve them as they were; but one day, when he went to show them to a visitor, he discovered, to his dismay, that the heat of the drawer had hatched them into serpents, and there was a heap of crawling things before his eyes. So despondency is a serpent's egg, which, if we are not careful, will hatch in our hearts into a serpent itself, and poison us with its venomous bite. — *Wm. M. Taylor*.

III. SAVED BY FAITH (vs. 6-9).

"There is life for a look at the crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee;

Then look, sinner, look unto him and be saved, —
Unto him who was nailed to the tree!"

LESSON VII. — AUGUST 18.

THE NEW HOME IN CANAAN. — DEUTERONOMY 6: 3-15.

Golden Text. — *Thou shalt bless the Lord thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.* — DEUT. 8: 10.

THE SECTION includes the history in Numbers 21 to 26, and the whole of Deuteronomy.

THE TIME. — Early in B.C. 1451 (Usher), near the close of the fortieth year of the exodus, and a short time before the death of Moses.

THE PLACE.—The Israelites were encamped in the broad space between the River Jordan and the mountains of Moab, about opposite Jericho, on the eastern bank of the river. This tract has a breadth of four or five miles. The space occupied by the Israelitic camp consisted, in the main, of a large and luxurious oasis upon this bank, slightly raised above the barren flat. — *Rev. E. T. Espin.*

MOSES was 120 years old.

THE BOOK OF DEUTERONOMY, that is, *the second or repeated law*, consists chiefly of three discourses of Moses, with certain appendices. The discourses were delivered during the eleventh and twelfth months of the fortieth year of the wanderings. Deuteronomy 1: 3 shows the beginning in the eleventh month and from a comparison of dates given in Joshua (5: 10; 4: 19; 1: 11; and Deut. 34: 8) we learn that Moses died early in the twelfth month.

THE EVENTS AT THE CLOSE OF THE WANDERINGS.

1. **THE MARCH.** After the lesson from the fiery serpents the people continued their march southward, around the southern end of the highlands of Edom, toward the east, then northward by the Dead Sea till they came to the plains of Moab by the Jordan opposite to Jericho (Num. 22: 1).

2. **THE PROPHECY OF BALAAM**, soon after the arrival of the Israelites (Num. 22-24), is a beautiful and comforting story. Balak, the king of Moab, hired Balaam, who had the reputation of a prophet, to go up on the mountain and lay a curse upon Israel, who lay in the valley below. But the curse was turned to a blessing, "Who can count the dust of Jacob!" "Let me die the death of the righteous and let my last end be like his!" "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is their any divination against Israel." "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!" "Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee." "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not nigh; there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel."

3. **THE NEW CENSUS** (Num. 26), to organize the nation for conquest.

4. **THE CONQUEST** of the country east of the Jordan, including the story of Og, king of Bashan, with his iron bedstead (Num. 21: 21-35; Deut. 2 and 3).

5. **THE SETTLEMENT** of two and a half tribes in the country east of the Jordan (Num. 32 and Deut. 3: 12-20).

6. **THE REPETITION OF THE LAW** and the renewal of the covenant (Deut. 5); and the farewell discourses of Moses to the people, of which to-day's lesson is a part.

7. **THE DEATH OF MOSES** in a peculiar and unknown manner upon the top of Pisgah, a mountain peak of Moab. He could not enter the promised land on earth, but God gave him a vision of its glories from Pisgah's top, showing him that he had accomplished his work, that his life had been successful. This scene has ever been a type of the visions of heaven, the earnest and foretastes, the heavenly experiences of the Christian's promised land, which God gives to his people. The setting day is radiant with cloud glories unseen even at noonday. God's Word has open windows through which shine glimpses of heaven and ideals of the blessed life. But these visions come after faithful service and the ripening of the character in love and trust. After the vision, Moses died "by the kiss of the Lord," the rabbis say. "His eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," but "God took him, and he was not" here. But where and what he was, was shown when he appeared in glory on the Mount of Transfiguration with Christ the Lord.

And had he not high honor?
The hillside for his pall,
To lie in state, while angels wait
With stars for tapers tall;

And the dark rock pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave;
And God's own hand, in that lonely land,
To lay him in the grave.

— *Cecil Frances Alexander.*

Thus closed the earthly life of one of the greatest men who ever lived.

A GREAT STATESMAN,
A GREAT GENERAL,
A GREAT LAWGIVER,

A GREAT PROPHET,
A GREAT WRITER,
A GREAT LEADER,

But, above all,

GREAT IN CHARACTER.

3. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do *it*; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, ¹ as the LORD ^a God of thy fathers hath promised ^b thee, in the ² land that floweth with milk and honey.

4. ³ Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God *is* one LORD:

5. And ⁴ thou shalt love the LORD thy God ⁵ with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.

¹ Gen. 15: 5; 22: 17. ² Ex. 3: 8.

⁴ Deut. 10: 12. Matt. 22: 37.

Rev. Ver: *a* the God.

³ Isa. 42: 8. Mark 12: 29, 32. John

Mark 12: 30. Luke 10: 27.

⁵ unto thee in a land flowing.

17: 3. 1 Cor. 8: 4, 6.

⁵ 2 Kings 23: 25.

EXPLANATORY.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NEW HOME.

These are set forth by Moses, in full view of the promised land, to cheer and encourage the Israelites to take possession; and to do all that was possible to make them faithful and obedient, so that they might retain possession, and enjoy the blessings and accomplish the work of the true people of God.

I. A Rich and Fertile Country.—V. 3. That ye may increase mightily, because they would be fruitful, and long lived, and healthy, if they obeyed. By a large population there would be more people to enjoy, more to be blessed, more to do good to other nations, and they would have a firmer and more influential place among the nations. As the Lord thy God hath promised thee, repeatedly to Abraham, Genesis 13: 14-17; 15: 5; 18: 18; 22: 17, 18; to Jacob, Genesis 28: 14; to Moses, Exodus 3: 8. In the land. Some omit *in*, and connect *the land* with *promised thee*. That floweth with milk and honey, a favorite phrase for great fertility, and an abundance of the luxuries as well as necessities of life.

THE CHRISTIAN'S PROMISED LAND. This includes not only heaven, but the Kingdom of God on earth; and the perfection of Christian character and experience. Here numbers are a great blessing and power. Here is a land which spiritually flows with milk and honey. Good things are in it more than heart can conceive, — rest, peace, prosperity, love, heaven begun.

II. Children of the One True God.—V. 4. The Lord. Jehovah (as always when printed in small capitals) the ever-living God, self-existing, the source of Life. Our, belonging to us, the one we worship. Our God, Elohim in the plural, as is usual all through the Old Testament. The plural expresses not many Gods (for it is repeatedly declared that he is one, a unity), but the manifold nature of God, including all the attributes of being, all good qualities, all powers, all authority. Is one Lord. This statement contains more than (1) the truth that God is a unity; there are not many Gods but only one; but also (2) he is the absolute, eternal God, and he alone. He fills the whole universe. (3) His word therefore has sole authority.

It would be a terrible thing if there were conflicting deities, some having one dominion, and others another. There would be no peace, no safety, no exaltation of soul, no assurance of hope, no eternal heaven.

SCIENCE has been a great help to believers in revelation, by its proof of the unity of God, a God ever present, governing and controlling the mighty worlds of heaven, and equally well the minutest atoms which only the most powerful microscope can reveal to us.

THE ONE GOD has been far more clearly revealed by his Son, Jesus Christ. The more we know of him, the better we can worship, and love, and trust him.

III. The Life of Love.—V. 5. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart. The specification, "with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might," is intended to include every faculty that can possibly come in question. The heart is mentioned as the seat of the understanding (including thoughts, desires, passions, affections. — *Thayer*); the soul as the center of will and personality; the might as representing the outgoings and energies of all the vital powers. — *Cook*. Christ quotes this as the first and great commandment (Matt. 22: 38). He that has this love in his heart has the fountain and source of all virtue. It is to the life what the mainspring is to a watch, what a fountain is to a stream, what the soul is to the body, what the two olive trees of Zechariah's vision were to the lamps they fed. It will express itself in love to man

6. And ¹ these words, which I command thee this day, shall be ^e in thine heart :

7. And ² thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

8. ³ And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be ^d as frontlets between thine eyes.

¹ Deut. 11: 18. Psal. 37: 31; 40: 8; 119: 11. Prov. 3: 3. Isa. 51: 7.

² Deut. 4: 9; 11: 19. Psal. 78: 4-6. Eph. 6: 4.

³ Ex. 13: 9, 16. Deut. 11: 18. Prov. 3: 3; 6: 21; 7: 3.

Rev. Ver.: ^c upon. ^d for.

(see *Poem*, "Abou Ben Ahdem"). This, as the rule of conduct, will ennoble and save any nation. It makes heaven what it is. It is the work of Christianity first of all to implant this principle of love in the heart, and when this is done, all the great practical questions that vex the world will be settled, the difficulties be removed, the wrongs destroyed.

REASONS FOR LOVING GOD SUPREMACY. (1) He is supremely good; he is the sum of all good. He that loves God loves all that is good, and hates all that is evil. (2) He is not only good, but lovable. His goodness is attractive; it is worthy of love. (3) All we have and are we owe to him; and the only way in which we can make any return is to love him and obey him in love. That is all that is ours to give; to withhold it is unutterably mean. (4) "The best thing in man is love, and God wants the best." (5) Such love not only honors God, but elevates man. Love is the most ennobling act of the soul; and the nobler and higher the object and the more intense the love, so much the more is the one who thus loves ennobled, purified, enlarged, exalted in nature. (6) In him are found all that ought to move the highest affections of men.

IV. **Religious Education.**—Vs. 6, 7. 6. These words which I command thee this day, chapter 5 and onwards, shall be in thine heart, learned by heart, understood, and loved. The parents and older people must first of all be right themselves, the word of God must be understood and made the center and the rule of life before they can teach it as they ought.

7. And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children. In every way, by home instruction, and by schools, and by Sabbath worship and teaching. And shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, etc. The atmosphere of the home shall be full of these truths. Men will speak often of that *Home Teaching*, which is of the greatest interest. Conversation is a marvellous power for culture and training. The events of the day, the deeds of ourselves and of others, can be made the occasion of moral instruction, in a concrete and vivid form. They are to great moral principles what the particles in the air are to the light, which would be generally invisible but for the objects which reflect and disperse it. The home is in its nature a university. It is a large part of the true "university extension" movement. There is something in it, if rightly used, to train every faculty of the mind. The home is like the philosopher's garden, of which he boasted to his friends. A visitor wondered, when he saw how small it was. "Yes," said the philosopher, "it is not very long, nor very broad, but, oh, it is wondrous high." Mrs. Hunt says that the Star of Bethlehem for temperance stands over the schoolhouse. The Star of Bethlehem for morals and religion stands over the home.

FAMILY TRAINING is the greatest influence around the young.

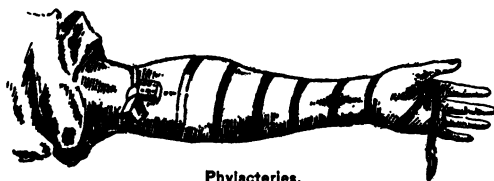
FAMILY RELIGION is the foundation of church, of Sunday school, of religious life, of the country's morality and prosperity.

FAMILY PRAYERS are a great aid to family religion.

THE FAMILY ATMOSPHERE, of religious life, of benevolence, of temperance, of kindness, of intelligence, of bright conversation, is the largest factor in family training.

V. **Religion in the Daily Life.**

—Vs. 8, 9. 8. Thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, etc. It was a literal and formal interpretation of this command which led to the use of phylacteries upon the arm and upon the forehead. These are small cubical leather cases, in which are parchments



Phylacteries.
(Worn on the Arm.)

9. ¹ And thou shalt write them upon the ^aposts of thy house, and ²on thy gates.

10. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall ^ahave brought thee into the land which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, ³ which thou buildedst not,

11. And houses full of all good *things*, which thou filledst not, and ^b wells digged, which thou ¹diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; ¹ when ³ thou shalt have eaten and be full;

12. *Then* beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, ^a from the house of bondage.

13. Thou shalt ^a fear the LORD thy God, and ¹ serve him, and shalt ^a swear by his name.

¹ Deut. 11: 20.

² Josh. 24: 13. Psa. 105: 44.

³ Deut. 8: 10-18.

⁴ Deut. 10: 12, 20; 13: 4. Matt.

4: 10. Luke 4: 8.

⁵ Psa. 63: 11. Isa. 65: 16. Jer. 5: 7; 12: 16.

Rev. Ver.: ^a door posts. ^f upon. ^g bring. ^h cisterns hewn out. ⁱ hewedst. ^j and thou shalt eat. ^k out of. ^l him shalt thou serve.

containing four passages of Scripture in four columns (Ex. 13: 1-10, 11-16; Deut. 6: 4-9, and 11: 13-21). These are bound upon the arm and between the eyes by leather thongs. But the real meaning of this command is that God's law should be in every deed of the hand, in the sight of the eyes, in the plans of the head. Every part of the daily life should be ruled by God's law. It should never be forgotten.

9. Write them upon the posts of thy house.

This is the origin of the Jewish *Mezuzah*, "the name given to the square piece of parchment, inscribed with Deuteronomy 6: 4-9 and 11: 13-21, which is rolled up in a small cylinder of wood or metal, and affixed to the right-hand post of every door in a Jewish house. The pious Jew touches the *Mezuzah* on each occasion of passing, or kisses his finger, and says in Hebrew Psalm 121: 8, 'The Lord shall preserve thy going out,' etc."—*Cook*. The name of God is always seen on the outside through an opening, or through the glass case. The real meaning is that the whole house is to be ruled according to God's law; all goings out and comings in must be for right purposes. Since writings were rare and costly, few could possess copies of the law, or read them if they did possess them; this command kept the truths of God ever before the eyes of the people.

VI. **Inheriting the Earth.**—V. 10. Give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not. The Israelites were about to make a great change in their mode of living, from tents to cities; from a wild and wandering to a civilized and settled life. This exposed them to special dangers, because the change was sudden and these new comforts were not gradually gained by their own exertions, but were already prepared for them by the ungodly nations that were to be driven out. Thus God's people as a kingdom shall inherit righteously and naturally all the things the world has been gaining. Commerce carries her missionaries; printing presses multiply copies of her gospel; railroads are her highways; wealth builds churches and colleges, and aids her work for man. Science investigates and explores, and its results confirm her truths; even wars open the doors of nations, and conquests protect her missionaries.

VII. **The Condition of Retaining Possession of the Land.**—Vs. 11-15. 11. When thou shalt have eaten and be full; then comes the danger which ever accompanies prosperity and luxury.

12. Beware lest thou forget the Lord, forget all you owe to *First Danger*. him, forget to thank him, to worship him, to love and obey him.

Worldliness, luxury, and forgetfulness of God have ruined many a nation and many a soul.

13. Thou shalt fear, reverence, look up to with awe, feel how great he is, and how



Phylacteries.
(Worn on the Forehead.)

*Christianity Inherits
the Earth.*

14. Ye shall not ¹ go after other gods, ² of the gods of the ^m people which *are* round about you ;

15. (For ³ the LORD thy God ^a is a jealous God among you ;) ⁴ lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee, and ^o destroy thee from off the face of the earth.

¹ Deut. 8: 19; 11: 28.

³ Ex. 20: 5; Deut. 4: 24.

Rev. Ver.: *no* peoples.

^o he destroy.

Jer. 25: 6.

⁴ Deut. 7: 4; 11: 17.

in the midst of thee is a jealous God.

² Deut. 13: 7.

he will punish those who rebel against him. And swear by his name. Not profanely, but all legal oaths shall be in his name, and not in the name of the heathen gods, for that is a recognition of them as real gods, and is a step in the direction of worshipping them.

14. Ye shall not go after other gods, to which they would be tempted by association with their heathen neighbors. A visible god, feasts in his honor, the orgies with which they were accompanied, the desire to appear well in the eyes of the heathen world would all exercise no little fascination, and tempt the people from the simple and pure worship of the unseen but true God.

15. Thy God is a jealous God, that is, determined to have no rival. The anger of the Lord, his intense feeling against sin which leads him to punish. Destroy thee from off the face of the earth, because they would no longer be his people, and kingdom, and proclaim his truth, and carry out his purposes. If they refused to do the work that must be done for the salvation of the world, then they must be set one side, and another people formed who would be God's instrument of redemption.

NOTE 1. This warning is set before the Israelites with marvellous power in the third of Moses' farewell addresses (chaps. 27-30) in which is commanded the solemn renewal of their covenant as soon as they enter their new home; and then follow in burning words and vivid pictures the blessings which will follow obedience and the curses which will crowd around disobedience.

NOTE 2. The whole history of the Jews is a commentary on this lesson, full of illustrations and examples which bear upon the individual and national life of to-day. What Charles Kingsley says of England is true of our land as well. "Men say 'As long as England is ahead of the world in coal and iron, she may defy the world.' I do not believe it, for if she became a wicked nation, all the coal and iron in the universe would not keep her from being ruined."

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

The Commentaries on Deuteronomy are nearly the same as on the rest of the Pentateuch. Charles Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch*, chaps. 15, 16; William M. Taylor's *Moses the Lawgiver*, 408-468; Norris' *Patriarchs of the Bible*, 213; Thornley Smith's *Moses and His Times*; Hamilton's *Moses the Man of God*, chap. 25; Maurice's *Patriarchs and Lawgivers*. In Nelson on *Infidelity* (264-276) is an account of previsions of the future at death. Mrs. Alexander's poem on *The Burial of Moses*; James Montgomery's *Death of Moses*. *Photographs* can be obtained of the famous statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

KEEP in mind the incidents of the last last few months of the forty years.

TRACE the journey on the map and locate the camp on the river bank, and the scene of the conquest east of the Jordan.

SUBJECT: THE BLESSINGS OF THE PROMISED LAND.

I. THE GREAT LEADER. Moses' character and work; his vision of the promised land.

PRACTICAL. Our Leader, and the view he gives of the Christian's promised land, — of perfected character, of millennial perfections, of an eternal heaven.

"Oh, could we stand where Moses stood
And view the landscape o'er,

Not Jordan's stream, nor death's cold flood
Could fright us from the shore."

Illustration. In Westminster Abbey is a marble tablet containing the medallion portraits of the two Wesleys combined together, and underneath is the inscription:—

"God buries the workers, but carries on the work."

Illustration. When Jabez Bunting, one of the greatest of Wesley's disciples, died, a minister of the Methodist denomination, in preaching his funeral sermon, closed a glowing peroration by saying, "When Bunting died, the sun of Methodism set." A plain man in the audience immediately shouted, "Glory be to God! that is a lie!" — *William M. Taylor.*

"Oh, may thy soldiers, faithful, true, and bold,
Fight as the saints who nobly fought of old,
And win with them the victor's crown of gold.

O blest Communion, fellowship divine;
We feebly struggle; they in glory shine;
Yet all are one in thee, for all are thine."

TENNYSON'S *poem*, one of his last, beginning "Sunset and Evening Star."

II. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BETTER LAND (vs. 3-11). Note them as given under *Explanatory*. The visible beauties are naturally followed by the moral characteristics. No outward charms, no physical delights, no crowns, or harps, or streets of gold can make the ideal life here, or the blessedness of heaven.

Illustration. Andrew Lang's *In the Wrong Paradise* shows, perhaps unintentionally, how unhappy a worldly man would be in a pure and holy heaven.

Illustration. The chapel of San Lorenzo at Florence contains the monuments which Michael Angelo executed in memory of his princely patrons. On one of these marvellous tombs the sculptor has carved two reclining figures, to represent respectively the Night and the Day. Night is personified as a woman sunk in uneasy slumber. Day is portrayed in the shape of a man, who lifts himself in disturbed awakening. But this latter figure has never been finished. The limbs are partly chiselled, but the head and face are merely blocked out of the marble. Some interruption stayed the master's hand, and he left his work there imperfect and incomplete. Now, that half-finished statue in San Lorenzo is a parable of our human nature. There is the same strange pathetic sense of incompleteness, the same dumb prophecy of a perfection intended and required. The earnest expectation of the sculptor's ideal lies there, waiting to be manifest. That figure, which seems struggling to free itself from its stony shroud, if it could speak, would surely break out with St. Paul's longing: "Ah! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" God's unfinished work is a wonderful fragment, full of hint and hope of what he meant it to be. And the Heavenly Worker fainteth not, neither is weary. — *T. H. Darlow.*

Illustration of the power of the atmosphere of the home and the home training is found in Hawthorne's "Rappacini's Daughter" in *Mosses from an Old Manse*.

III. THE CONDITIONS OF ENJOYING THIS LAND (vs. 11-15).

READ to the scholars selections from Moses' third discourse (Deut. 28-30).

NOTE. "Every privilege is a penalty. Every right is a duty. Every gift is a responsibility. Through the whole of life the principle runs. Election, which is a fact of life, is a privilege, and it is therefore a penalty. It is a fearful thing to be God's favorite. To be chosen of God is a terror — and a glory. 'Seemeth it but a small thing unto you that the God of Israel hath separated you from the congregation of Israel to bring you near to himself?' " — *Hugh Black.*

A CELEBRATED PICTURE "represents the New Year as a lovely maiden descending from heaven in a chariot of clouds. She is surrounded by flying cherubs, each carrying a gift for some one of the sons of earth. One bears in his chubby arms a golden crown, one a coffer of wealth, one an arrow from Love's quiver, one a wreath of bay, one — a coffin." So God at each turn of life is offering us great gifts, and if we refuse them the alternative is death.

Illustration. An unbeliever caused to be placed on his tombstone: —

"I have no hope of heaven, and no fear of hell."

This is an epitaph fitting for a brute, but sad, alas, for a man.

Illustrations. A preparation is necessary for the enjoyment of all God's best blessings. A blind man, or one who shuts his eyes, would be none the wiser if surrounded by all the glories of paradise. A person who refuses to learn to sing cannot join the choir. He who refuses to learn to read gains nothing, even though the best literature ever written were printed in letters of light all over the sky. The clerk who does not learn his business can never become a member of the firm. Those who refuse to learn the music of heaven, to acquire its virtues, to do its deeds, to love its purity, to serve its God, cannot enter heaven. They shut themselves out.

LESSON VIII.—AUGUST 25.

CROSSING THE JORDAN.—JOSHUA 3: 5-17.

Golden Text.—*When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.*—ISA. 43: 2.

THE SECTION includes the first four chapters of Joshua.

TIME.—B.C. 1451 (Usher), early in April. The crossing of the Jordan was on the tenth of Nisan. This was exactly forty years after the exodus.

PLACE.—At the fords of the Jordan opposite Jericho.

THEIR NUMBERS.—The warriors, men over twenty years old, numbered 601,730 (Num. 26: 51), besides 23,000 Levites. This would make over two millions persons altogether; or, by another possible way of reading the figures, one million. (See on Lesson IV.)

THE BOOK OF JOSHUA.—Now often included with the first five books and all together called the *Hexateuch*, a sixfold book. *The author* of Joshua is unknown, though Jewish tradition ascribes most of it to Joshua himself. At any rate, the most of the materials were probably written down by Joshua. *The extent of time.* The events of the book extend over twenty-five or thirty years.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—The forty years' wanderings are ended. The great leader, Moses, has done his work successfully and died upon the mountains of Nebo. The people are encamped in the valley of the Jordan opposite Jericho, in full sight of their new home.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Ad'ām; Am'ōrites; Cā'nāanites (Kā'nānites); Gīr'gāsh-ites; Hīt'tites; Hī'vites; Jēb'ūsites; Pēr'izzites; Sī'hōn; Zār'ētan.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The New Leader.—The mantle of Moses fell upon Joshua, the son of Nun, and he was appointed by God to be the leader of the people. (1) *His name* was originally Hoshea, *Salvation*, or *Help*. To this was added afterwards the prefix *Jeh*, Jehovah, and his name became Jehoshua, shortened into Joshua, *Salvation from Jehovah* (Num. 13: 2, 8, 16). (2) *His birthplace* must have been in Goshen, Egypt, where he was a slave of Pharaoh. (3) *His ancestry.* He was a descendant of Joseph, through Ephraim, and, according to 1 Chronicles 7: 22-27, he was the eleventh generation from Joseph. His father's name was Nun, and his grandfather, Elishama, was a captain of the army of the Ephraimites, 40,500 in number, at the organization of the Israelites soon after the exodus (Num. 2: 18, etc., compared with 1 Chron. 7: 27). (4) *His age* was about eighty-four at the time he became commander-in-chief. He died at the age of 110 (Judg. 2: 8). And if he was twenty-seven years in Canaan, as the Jews say, he would be eighty-three at the time of the crossing in B.C. 1451, and therefore forty-three at the time of the exodus, or thirty-seven years younger than Moses. His birth, according to Usher's chronology, would therefore be about B.C. 1534. (5) *His previous life.* His earlier life was that of an Egyptian slave. His first appearance was as a commander of the Israelite forces in a battle with the Amalekites soon after the exodus (Ex. 17: 8-16). He then became an attendant or aide-de-camp to Moses. He was one of the explorers sent out to spy out the land, and, with Caleb, stood up with great courage and faith against public opinion, which was ready to stone them to death. (6) *In character,* he was distinguished for courage, for simple faith, deep piety, humility, and faithfulness. He was a great general, with keen observation, celerity of movement, skilful strategy.

NOTE 1. That all his past life was a preparation for the great work to which he was now called. He never could have done the work, he never would have been called to it, had he not been faithful, active, ready to learn, and always doing his best. He that is faithful over a few things will be made ruler over many things. This is the only ladder upward. So it was with David. So it always has been, and always will be.

NOTE 2. When the time came, God called him, and opened the door to the great work of his life.

NOTE 3. God endorsed him before all the people by working through him similar wonders to those by which he proved to the people that he had chosen Moses.

5. And Joshua said unto the people, ¹Sanctify yourselves: for to morrow the LORD will do wonders among you.

¹ Ex. 19: 10, 14. Lev. 20: 7. Josh. 7: 13.

II. The New Movement. — A new era was now to begin, toward which all their past history led them. It was a great, solemn, difficult work, but out of its success would come an uplift to the whole nation. Henceforward they would live on a higher level.

1. BEFORE THEM LAY THE PROMISED LAND, rich and beautiful in its spring glory. The territory was ample and lay in the very center of the then civilized world. — *T. Smith*. The records of Rameses II. show the condition of Palestine and the adjacent countries in the very age of Moses. The Egyptian king brought back from them, he tells us, gold, glass, gums, cattle, slaves, ivory, ebony, boats, horses, chariots inlaid with gold and silver, or painted, iron, steel, dates, oil, wine, asses, cedar, suits of armor, fragrant wood, war galleys, incense, gold dishes with handles, ornaments of lapis lazuli, silver dishes, precious stones, honey, lead, spears of brass, colors, — the plunder, in fact, of a rich and civilized country. The meadows of Palestine, its fortresses, its groves, and its orchards are mentioned, showing that prosperity of every kind abounded. — “Lepsius” in *Geikie*. Such a land was worth every effort to gain.

Ancient Riches of Palestine.

2. Before them also lay the GREAT DIFFICULTIES TO BE ENCOUNTERED. The list of nations who possessed the land is given in verse 9. Some of them were powerful. There were formidable leagues of chiefs and kings, organized armies, with giants among them, war-horses, and iron chariots, strong stone fortresses, in a country possessed by those who knew every foot of it. At the same time, we learn from the monuments lately discovered that probably at this time they had been greatly weakened by Egyptian conquest, and there was some such preparation for the new-comers as there was among the Indians when the Pilgrims came over to New England.

3. WHY THEY BEGAN THEIR CONQUEST HERE. Because the natural entrance to the land was either at the north or at the south, and there the people would be best prepared for defence, while they would not expect any attack here, because the river itself was a great and almost impassable defence. So that here was an unguarded place.

III. Preparations for Crossing. — V. 5. (1) Two explorers were sent across the river, to investigate and report. Their story is told in chapter 2. They reported that terror had fallen on all the inhabitants of the land, their courage had melted away, and their hearts were faint; for they had heard what the Lord had done for the Israelites in Egypt, and against their neighbors across the river, Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan. This report, of course, gave courage and faith to Israel. (2) The announcement was made that in three days the march would begin (1: 10, 11), and that they should prepare three days' rations. (3) A movement began toward the river (3: 1), from the plateau of the acacias (Shittim) about five miles to the borders of the river. (4) Still more important was their spiritual preparation.

The Spies.

5. And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify (make holy) yourselves. The command now given was undoubtedly of the same import with that given by Moses on the eve of the delivery of the law upon Mount Sinai (Ex. 19: 10-14). They were to wash their persons and their garments, and to abstain from everything that might indispose their minds to a serious and devout attention to the miracle about to be wrought in their behalf. A similar command was generally given on great and solemn occasions (Lev. 20: 7, 8; Num. 11: 18; 1 Sam. 16: 5; Joel 2: 16). — *Bush*. These were the outward signs of the sanctification, which really consisted at the same time in the spiritual purification, the turning of the heart to God in faith and trust in his promise, and in willing obedience to his commands, that they might rightly take to heart the wonder of grace which the Lord would the next day perform among them. — *Keil*.

Sanctification.

The special manifestation of God's presence should be awaited by his people in a posture of deep humiliation, and penitence, and prayer, and by diligent efforts to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. — *Bush*.

1. This is the only appropriate way to approach a holy God who abhors all sin.
2. It honors God, as far as imperfect beings can honor him.
3. It sets forth the holy nature of God to others.
4. It fits us to see and understand God's words and marvellous deeds. Without holiness no man can see God.

6. And Joshua spake unto the priests, saying, ¹ Take up the ark of the covenant, and pass over before the people. And they took up the ark of the covenant, and went before the people.

7. And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to ² magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that ³ as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee.

8. And thou shalt command the priests that bear the ark of the covenant, saying, When ye are come to the brink of the ⁴ water of Jordan, ⁵ ye shall stand still in Jordan.

¹ Num. 4: 15. ² Josh. 4: 14. ³ 1 Chron. 29: 25. ⁴ 2 Chron. 1: 1. ⁵ Josh. 1: 5. ⁶ v. 17. Rev. Ver.: ^a waters.

To morrow, Nisan 10th (4: 19), the 40th anniversary of the exodus. **The Lord will do wonders among you.** By this miracle (1) God inspired his people with faith and courage for their future work (v. 10); (2) he put fear in the hearts of their enemies; (3) he gave those enemies new proofs that he was the true God, and thus called on them to repent; (4) this miracle being done through Joshua, endorsed him before the people as their divinely appointed leader. God's miracles through Christ and his miracles of grace ever since have had similar effects.

Objects of the Miracle.

IV. **Marching Orders.** — Vs. 6-13.

1. **THE ARK OF THE COVENANT LEADS THE WAY.** 6. **Spake unto the priests.** Whose duty this was. The ministers of religion went before even the commander-in-chief. **The ark of the covenant.** The *ark of the covenant*, or the *testimony*, was a sacred chest containing the two tables of stone, inscribed with the Ten Commandments (and the pot of manna, and Aaron's rod. Heb. 9: 4.) It was the symbol of Jehovah's presence, of his covenant promise, and of their covenant of obedience. **Went before the people.** There

was to be a space of two thousand cubits, or nearly three quarters of a mile, between the ark and the people, so that all could see the sacred symbol of the divine presence (Josh. 3: 4), which could not be done if the ark was closely surrounded by a crowd.

2. **THE LEADER TO BE PUBLICLY HONORED BY GOD.** 7. **And the Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee:** make thee great, put honor upon thee, as the leader and commander of the people. Henceforth he would be accepted as the true successor of Moses. Without doubt, there were many ambitious men who felt that they could make quite as good generals as Joshua, and who would have liked the place. This act of God, crowning Joshua's career, would settle this question. It is a great blessing to any people to have a recognized and trusted leader.

3. **THE LEADERS OF RELIGION** with the ark must take the most dangerous place.

8. **Ye shall stand still in Jordan.** They were first required to pause on the brink of

the stream, till the channel was laid dry, and then they seem to have advanced and taken their station in the midst of it, till all the people had passed over. If the waters, dammed up some miles above, should

break through their barriers, they would be the first to be destroyed, and the people would have some warning. Thus they were an example of faith in God, an object lesson in plain sight of the people.



Fords of the Jordan.

9. And Joshua said unto the children of Israel, Come hither, and hear the words of the LORD your God.

10. And Joshua said, Hereby ye shall know that ¹ the living God *is* among you, and *that* he will without fail ² drive out from before you the ^b Canaanites, and the ^c Hittites, and the ^d Hivites, and the ^e Perizzites, and the ^f Girgashites, and the ^g Amorites, and the ^h Jebusites.

11. Behold, the ark of the covenant of ³ the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan.

12. Now therefore ⁴ take you twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, ¹ out of every tribe a man.

13. And it shall come to pass, ¹ as ⁵ soon as the soles of the feet of the priests that bear the ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, *that* the waters of Jordan shall be cut off ^k from the waters that come down from above; and they ⁶ shall stand ¹ upon a heap.

¹ Deut. 5: 26. ¹ Sam. 17: 26.

Hos. 1: 10. Matt. 16: 16.

¹ Thess. 1: 9.

² Ex. 33: 2. Deut. 7: 1. Psal. 44: 2.

³ Mic. 4: 13. Zech. 4: Rev. Ver.: ^b Canaanite.

¹⁴; 6: 5.

⁴ Josh. 4: 2.

⁵ vs. 15, 16.

⁶ Psal. 78: 13; 114: 3.

^c Hittite.

^d Hivite.

^e Perizzite.

^f Girgashite.

^g Amorite.

^h Jebusite.

ⁱ for every.

^j when the soles.

^k even the waters.

^l in one heap.

4. THE ANNOUNCEMENT. 9. Said unto the children of Israel, Come . . . and hear. It seems that the Israelites had no intimation how they were to cross the river till shortly before the event. — *J. F. and B.* They expected something, but did not know what.

10. Hereby ye shall know that the living God is among you. Not an idol, not a mere "bright essence increate." Jehovah would prove his existence and his presence by his works. We know him by what he does. By this manifestation of power he would prove to them that he would give them the victory over the dangers and difficulties they greatly feared, and that he would without fail drive out from before you those who then possessed the land. By what God has done, we know what he can do, and will do. "They greatly needed this proof, for the difficulties of the Hebrews were immense. To the iron chariots, the horses, and the fortresses of the country, and its formidable leagues of chiefs and kings, they could oppose only a rude, half-armed militia, with inadequate military training." — *Geikie*. The Canaanites were, strictly speaking, the *lowlanders*, who inhabited the lower tracts of Palestine, on the sea coast and western bank of the Jordan (Num. 13: 29). But this term is often used in a wider sense, including all the tribes descended from Canaan, including all the tribes here named. The Hittites were descended from Heth, the second son of Canaan, and settled in the time of Abraham in and round Hebron (Gen. 23: 10; 25: 9). They afterwards became a great nation, and spread over the regions north of Palestine. The Hivites, descendants of Canaan, were a commercial people. They were mainly located "under Hermon, in the land of Mizpeh" (Josh. 11: 3), in Mount Lebanon (Judg. 3: 3). The Perizzites: *rustics*, or *villagers*; Canaanites who dwelt in open, unwall'd towns, to the south and on the western flanks of Mount Carmel. The Girgashites were probably a family of the Hivites, dwelling east of the Sea of Galilee. The Amorites: *mountaineers*, descendants of the fourth son of Canaan, were the most powerful of the Canaanitish people. They occupied (Gen. 14: 7) the barren heights west of the Dead Sea, and stretched west to Hebron (Gen. 13: 18; 14: 13). The Jebusites, a Canaanite tribe, were in possession of the central highlands around Jerusalem, their stronghold.

11. Behold, the ark . . . of the Lord of all the earth: who, therefore, has the right and the power to give you the land. Passeth over before you: to lead you, to make the way for you, to prove that it is safe for you to follow, to show that the power and the victory are from God.

12. Now therefore take you twelve men: to bring memorial stones from the river bed, as described later on.

13. And it shall come to pass. This verse is the promise of what is described in verse 16, as fulfilled.

14. And it came to pass, when the people removed from their tents, to pass over Jordan, ^m and the priests ⁿ bearing the ¹ ark of the covenant ^o before the people;

15. And ^p as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the ^q brim of the water, (for ^r Jordan overfloweth all his banks ^s all the time of harvest,)

16. That the waters which came down from above stood *and* rose up ^t upon a heap very far from the city Adam, that *is* beside ^u Zarethan; and those that ^v came down ^w toward the sea of the ^x plain, *even* the ^y salt sea, ^z failed, *and* were cut off: and the people passed over right against Jericho.

¹ Acts 7: 45.

² 1 Chron. 12: 15. Jer.

12: 5; 49: 19.

³ Josh. 4: 18; 5: 10, 12.

⁴ 1 Kings 4: 12; 7: 46.

⁵ Deut. 3: 17.

⁶ Gen. 14: 3. Num.

34: 3.

Rev. Ver.: *m* omit and.

n that bare.

o being before.

p when.

q brink.

r in one heap, a great

way off, at Adam,

the city that.

s Zarethan. *t* went.

u Arabah.

v were wholly cut off.

V. **The Jordan Crossed**, and the people stand within the promised land. — Vs. 14-17. 15. For Jordan overfloweth all his banks all the time of harvest: *i.e.*, the barley harvest, which is during the latter part of March and first of April in this warm and sheltered region. Dr. Thomson says that he has visited this place "early in April, and found the barley harvest around Jericho already ended." There are two or three series of banks to the river. Nearest the usual banks at this place is a low, level beach about twenty rods wide, "which low flats are the banks that were flooded when the Israelites passed over." The river at this place is about one hundred feet wide, and the margin overflowed about four hundred feet more, making about five hundred feet in total width. — *Land and Book*, new ed., I., 362, 363. Others represent the width as much greater. The English expedition down the Jordan speaks of the flood in winter as extending for the width of half a mile. — *Journal of Geological Society*, XVIII., 116. President Bartlett, when travelling in Palestine, found, on the 22d of March, the Jordan "rushing along like a mill-race, and, though it had fallen from its greatest height, the proper banks of the channel were invisible, and indicated only by lines of oleanders and other shrubs and trees." — *From Egypt to Palestine*, p. 451.

The cause of this great amount of water is found in the melting snows of Lebanon. At some other times the river can be easily forded.

WHY THIS SEASON WAS CHOSEN FOR CROSSING. This season of high water was wisely chosen; for (1) the miracle was the more stupendous and impressive to the Israelites. (2) It inspired their enemies with greater terror. (3) Those enemies, had the crossing been attempted when the water was low, would have appeared upon the opposite shores to annoy the Israelites. Why, then, did they not dispute it upon the present occasion? The answer is simple. They trusted to the swollen river, which they knew no army could cross. (4) The crossing in harvest was also providentially ordered with reference to the food of the people; they entered the land when it yielded abundance (see Josh. 5: 11, 12). — *Johnson*.

16. The waters . . . rose up upon a heap very far from the city of Adam. The true meaning is expressed by the R.V., "rose up in one heap, a great way off, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan." That is, in some way, by direct miraculous power, or by some means, the waters were dammed up there long enough for the people to pass over the Jordan. Where Adam was is unknown. Keil places it at *Kurn* (Horn) *Sartabeh*, about fifteen miles above the encampment. Here the river is narrow and flows between two ridges of mountains on either side, which here almost meet, which seems the most suitable point for damming up the river. "If we look for the secondary cause of this phenomenon, we may perhaps consider it to have been occasioned in the following way. At a point where the valley is most contracted and the mountains on either side approach most closely to the river bed, a fall of cliff took place, which for a time completely blocked the course of the stream. If the channel here was tolerably level, and the valley widened above the obstruction, so as to allow the imprisoned waters to expand in the form of a lake, the dam need not have been of great height. As long as the obstacle remained, the waters below it would fail and be cut off, and many miles of the bed being emptied, the great host could cross it at various points and thus in a comparatively short time effect the passage."

17. And the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the LORD stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, ¹ and all ² the Israelites passed over on dry ground, until all the ³ people were passed clean over Jordan.

¹ Ex. 14: 29.

Rev. Ver.: *w* Israel. *x* nation.

— *Rev. William Deane.* In this case the miraculous element would be in the providential arrangement of time and place, or special agency in detaching the landslide.

17. The priests . . . stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, proving their faith in God's promise, and calling attention to the fact that it was divine power alone that opened the way and preserved them in it. Thus the whole people crossed in safety, in a very few hours, and stood for the first time in their new home. They encamped at Gilgal. Then the river returned to its usual course. There was no retreat now. It was victory or death.

VI. **Memorial Stones.**—The twelve chosen men carried each one a large stone from the bottom of the river, and placed them in a conspicuous place as a memorial of the great thing God had done for them. They gave frequent occasion for repeating this story to children and children's children, as a training in faith, hope, and love to God. It was a perpetual object lesson and education.

The Sabbath, The Lord's Supper, Easter, Christmas are Christian memorials. The Fourth of July, Thanksgiving Day, New Year's, Decoration Day are patriotic memorials. Birthdays, marriage anniversaries, commencement days, etc., are personal memorials. Rightly kept, all these are a means of education and of perpetuating great truths.

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LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.

1. We have a great and tried Leader, whom God has proved by many miracles and by marvels of transformed character to be the Leader whom he has appointed to guide us to Our Promised Land.

2. A Jordan flows between us and every best good of life—new life, usefulness, education, higher spheres, enlarged lives.

3. Ministers and teachers are to lead, not follow. They are to be ever foremost in every good work. An officer cheers his men into action not from behind, but from the front. So the officer of God's army should be in the van of its progress, of thought, of action, of hardship.

4. For every special work there is need of special preparation. There is no sudden leaping into great goodness or great usefulness. Preparations for a voyage are often long and careful, though the start may be sudden. Lightning seems to flash suddenly from the clouds, but the electricity has been gathering for hours before. An old Chinese proverb says, "What will you have? says God. Pay for it, and take it."

5. The whole world has received its marching orders, Onward, forward, to Christ, to God, to goodness, to usefulness.

6. The church sees before her her promised land, the whole earth redeemed to Christ. Those parts of our country which are more settled, like the two and one half tribes, are to send their warriors to help the others to subdue the newer portions to Christ.

7. New eras and epochs in life are often of great value. They may lift the life to a higher level; they are doors to a larger sphere and nobler vision.

8. Every one needs to take a decided stand, a positive step that cannot be retraced, and commit himself to the side of right and of God. A decided stand is often more than half a victory.

9. "It is the first step that costs; but it is the last step that pays." All the other steps are in vain without the last.

10. God still does wondrous things for his people, marvels that prove that he is with his people, and which encourage them to go on in the conquest of evil,—marvels of converting power, of holy lives, of triumph over temptation, trouble, and death.

11. We know by what God has done for us that he will continue to do; by the fulfilment of one promise that he will fulfil the others. As David knew, by God's aid in killing the lion and the bear, that he would aid him in conquering Goliath.

12. We need to keep in mind what God has done for us in the past. The Christian sacraments are memorials which hold the great truths of the gospel before the mind. They are irrefragable witnesses to the great facts of Christianity. They are a public and unceasing testimony to the world about God, and Christ, and the gospel. Everywhere their voice is heard. They are an easy occasion and method of teaching the great truths of religion.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

INCLUDE the whole event in the teaching.

FIRST THE FACTS, then the spiritual truths which they illustrate.

THE NEW START IN LIFE.

I. THE NEW ERA was at hand. A great leader is appointed to guide into the land of blessing, but the Jordan flows between.

Illustration. The question, "Where did we come from?" is the prominent one in the scientific world just now; but the other question, "Where are you going to?" should hold most closely the attention of every young person.

Illustration. Most interesting are the patient experiments of Sir John Lubbock, proving that the eyes of ants are sensitive to the ultra-violet rays of light. To them, therefore, even "white" light is not white. "The familiar world which surrounds us," says Lubbock, "may be a totally different place to other animals. To them it may be full of music which we cannot hear, of color which we cannot see, of sensations which we cannot conceive."—*Popular Science Monthly*. So there are worlds of good before us, promised lands abounding in spiritual blessings, which we do not see. But if we follow our leader, we shall enter them in due season. Our eyes will be opened to see and our ears to hear.

II. PREPARATIONS (v. 5).

Illustration. Every invention and discovery of our latest civilization—the power of electricity and steam, of printing, of chemistry, of light—were always given to man. They are part of the promised land of the race. But men receive only so much as they actually take possession of. Only what they conquer can they have, and we have but just begun to acquire our inheritance in this world. The same is true of God's spiritual blessing, of the gospel of missions, of a holy life, of heaven upon earth.

III. MARCHING ORDERS (vs. 6-13).

Illustration.

They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth;
Lo, before us gleam her camp fires: we ourselves must Pilgrims be,
Launch our Mayflower, and steer boldly through the desperate winter sea.

—*Lowell*.

Illustration. Heaven does not put features of beauty in our lives, as the jeweller sets gems in clusters. The unlovely elements are not drawn out and replaced by lovely ones, like slides in the stereopticon. You must win your way through struggles to all noble attainment. It is he that overcometh that is made a pillar in God's temple.

IV. THE DECISIVE STEP (vs. 14-17).

Illustrations. When Cortez landed upon the shores of America, with his army, for the conquest of Mexico, he burned his ships behind him. There was no retreat. They must conquer or die. So Cæsar, in his *Commentaries*, tells us that the Helvetii, when they migrated, burned up everything they could not take with them. Houses, villages, crops, everything that could hold out to them any inducement to turn back from whatever obstacles or foes they might encounter, were given to the flames.

V. MEMORIALS.

Illustration. When Bunyan's Pilgrim had escaped from the castle of Giant Despair, he put up a monument of God's mercy and of warning.

Illustration. Jacob's stone at Bethel.

"Out of my stony griefs
Bethel I'll raise." •

LESSON IX. — SEPTEMBER 1.

THE FALL OF JERICO. — JOSHUA 6: 8-20.

Golden Text.—*By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.* — HEB. 11: 30.

THE SECTION includes chapters 5 and 6.

TIME.—The fall of Jericho was in April, B.C. 1451, within three weeks after the last lesson. The conquest of Canaan occupied the next six years, B.C. 1451 to 1445.

PLACE.—The Israelites were encamped at Gilgal about three miles from Jericho.

COMPARE 1 Corinthians 1: 25-31; Hebrews 11: 30-34.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Am'orites; Cā'naan (Kā'nān); Cā'naānites; Gīl'gāl (g hard); Rā'hāh.

EXPLANATORY.

I. Religious Services.—Josh. 5: 1-12. As soon as the Israelites had gained a foothold in the promised land, and were settled in their first camp at Gilgal, two institutions of religion were renewed with great solemnity. FIRST, the peculiar covenant with God was renewed by the sign of circumcision. This covenant seems to have been suspended during most of the forty years of wandering. It was the visible token that they were God's children and inheritors of the promises. It gave them a firmer assurance that the promises were now to be fulfilled.

THE SECOND religious institution to be renewed was the Passover, which had been omitted since they left Sinai. It recalled to mind the wonders God had done for them in delivering them from Egypt, the most powerful nation then existing. It thrilled them with assurance of faith. The song of God who "hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and the rider he hath cast into the sea," was again to be sung in action. He that saved them from the Egyptians could and would save them from the enemies now before them.

Thus they began their new life in their new home by observing their religious duties, in honor and obedience to God, by whose power alone they could have a prosperous national existence. Religion lay at the foundation of the nation. Besides, it made all their warfare and work religious. It was not for themselves chiefly, but for the Cause, the cause of God for all time, that they fought and suffered.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. To-day, religion lies at the foundation of our national hopes and of our individual character. As Carlyle says, the most important thing in any person or nation is his religion.

The remembrance of what God has done for us in the past, especially his love in sending his Son, is a source of hope and assurance in all days to come. It is the dawn after darkness, promising a bright to-morrow. The fact of God's goodness and power shines like a star through all the clouds that surround us. We trust in promises that have been tried and proved.

Every new day, every new work should be begun with religious feelings and religious acts. The whole of life should be lived not so much for self as for God's Cause. This transforms and transfigures daily living.

II. The Manna Exchanged for the Fruits of the Land.—5: 11, 12. At the close of the Passover the miraculous manna ceased, and henceforth the people lived on the fruits which the land itself supplied. The special gift was withheld when their wants could be supplied through the ordinary laws of nature.

TEACHINGS. God gives special helps for special needs, but it is better that our daily support should come through the ordinary channels. Nature's fruits are as really God's gift as miraculous manna. "The bread of the land, although not manna, was still bread from heaven." "There is as much divine power in the maintenance of the soul in holiness and righteousness all its days as in the communication of unspeakable visions." "Do not fret if the rhapsodies, and outbursts, and exuberant manifestations of earlier days have ceased. It is better to live by the ordinary laws of human life than by the abnormal and miraculous." — F. B. Meyer.

People are too apt to look for special divine interference for the progress of the church, or our own development and progress, instead of the power of the Holy Spirit through means, through daily duty, through hard and patient toil.

We need different supplies for different stages of experience; one for childhood, another for manhood. It was expedient for Jesus to go away, and for the Comforter to come in his place.

In each stage we eat the corn of that land. What blessed food it will be in heaven. "There is a heavenly manna which, because always needed, never fails — the true bread of life (John 6: 31-35)."— *Meredith*.

III. The Captain of the Lord's Host. — 5: 13-15; 6: 1-5. Chapter 6 should begin with verse 13 of chapter 5. Verse 1 of chapter 6 is a parenthetical clause. Read verse 2 immediately after 5: 5 to obtain the connection. Joshua was apparently reconnoitring the city of Jericho to see what steps could be taken for its capture. The fortifications were strong; the Israelites were totally unprepared with means for breaking down such walls; the only way open to them seemed to be the slow one of a siege till the city was starved into surrender; but this would be a dangerous plan, for it would give time for all the nations of Canaan to combine in one grand attack upon the defenceless Israelites. Doubtless Joshua was praying to God for light upon this most difficult of questions, when suddenly there appeared to him one with a drawn sword in his hand. He declared himself to be the captain of the host of the Lord, — not of the earthly armies alone or chiefly, but of all the hosts of heaven, the angels, the organized forces of nature, all spiritual powers and influences. He was doubtless the angel of his presence, who had guided their wanderings hitherto, the eternal word of God, who nearly fifteen centuries later was manifested in the flesh. As his superior officer, he proceeds to show Joshua in what way he can capture

the city fortress. For henceforth there is to be no pillar of cloud and fire to guide, but the unseen God. This was a transition event.

LESSONS. (1) We, too, have a leader who is the captain of the Lord's host, who guides and directs the church in its warfare and its work. He, and no earthly leader, is still the one true head of the church. (2) He is to us, as he was to Joshua, the assurance of the divine presence with us; manifest, unmistakable, realized. (3) The earthly warfare is only one division of the divine warfare against the principalities and powers of sin. But all the hosts of heaven are interested in it, as all the nation is interested in the issues of a battle in some insignificant village. It is exalting, enlarging, inspiring to



Modern Jericho.

be a part of a great movement in a noble cause.

IV. The City of Jericho was situated five or six miles west of the Jordan, and six or seven miles north of the Dead Sea. It was called the *City of Palms*, "from a glorious palm forest which stretched along the vale about eight miles in length, and three in breadth, Jericho being situated on the west side, and Gilgal (it is believed) on the east of the forest." "The city was beautifully situated at the foot of a lofty limestone range, close by a number of copious fountains, that still spread beauty and fertility as far as the eye can reach. Trickling through glades of tangled forest shrub, these streams even yet nourish a luxuriant herbage, and nothing is needed but the hand of cultivation to make the spot one of the richest and most beautiful on earth." — *Blakie*. The city could not have been very large, not more than one or two miles around, for it was encompassed seven times in one day by an army. Yet it was the most important city in the valley of Jordan; its walls were very thick and strong. "Not only was it conspicuous among the other Canaanitish towns for its wall, and gates, and its rich temple filled with gold, silver, iron, brass, and even Mesopotamian drapery, but its situation was such as must always have rendered its occupation necessary to any invader from that quarter. It was the key of Western Palestine, as standing at the entrance of the two main passes into the central mountains." — *Stanley*. "That Jericho was a city of great affluence is plain from the character of the spoil which was found in it." "Emerging from the forest of palms, they would see the lofty battlements of Jericho rising proudly to heaven; and, behind, the steep mountain cliffs." "It was a sight to appal any heart in which faith did not triumph; and it is a proof of the extraordinary

8. And it ^acame to pass, when Joshua had spoken unto the people, ^bthat the seven priests bearing the seven trumpets of rams' horns ^cpassed on before the LORD, and blew with the trumpets: and the ark of the covenant of the LORD followed them.

9. And the armed men went before the priests that blew ^dwith the trumpets,¹ and the rearward ^ecame after the ark, *the priests* ^fgoing on, and blowing with the trumpets.

10. And Joshua ^ghad commanded the people, saying, Ye shall not shout, nor ^hmake any noise with your voice, neither shall *any* word proceed out of your mouth, until the day I bid you shout; then shall ye shout.

11. So ⁱthe ark of the LORD ^jcompassed the city, going about *it* once: and they came into the camp, and lodged in the camp.

12. And Joshua rose early in the morning, ^kand the priests took up the ark of the LORD.

13. And ^lseven priests bearing ^mseven trumpets of rams' horn before the ark of the LORD went on continually, and blew with the trumpets: and the armed men went before them; ⁿbut the rearward came after the ark of the LORD, *the priests* ^ogoing on, and blowing with the trumpets.

¹ Num. 10: 25. Rev. Ver.: *a* was so, that when.

² Deut. 31: 25.

d omit with.

g omit had.

i he caused the.

l and.

b omit that.

e went.

h let your voice be heard.

j to compass.

m blowing with the trumpets as they went.

c before the Lord passed on.

f blowing with the trumpets

as they went.

k the seven.

courage with which they were now inspired that they advanced calmly and confidently to an enterprise seemingly so desperate." — *Blaikie*.

LESSONS. (1) The carnal heart is a walled Jericho. Its stronghold cannot be overthrown by merely human power. "But in our hours of disappointment, when we have tried our best in vain, and have fallen—as the seabirds which dash themselves against the lighthouse tower fall to the foot with broken wing—it is well to go forth alone, confessing our helplessness, and tarrying for the vision; for then we shall be likeliest to see the captain of the Lord's host." — *Meyer*. (2) The sinful world is another stronghold to be conquered by God's people. It belongs of right to God. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." No human power can subdue it to righteousness. Wickedness is entrenched in customs, fashions, society, selfish interests, and pleasures. Look at the numbers, the wealth, the rank, the armies, the principalities, and all powers of evil. Look at the massive walls of ignorance and passion. But the Captain of our Salvation has come to enable his people to gain the victory.

V. **The Strange Attack.**—Vs. 8-15. 8. When Joshua had spoken. Giving the orders he had received from the captain of the Lord's hosts. Trumpets of rams' horns. The one I have is ten or twelve inches long and makes an exceedingly harsh, loud, discordant noise. Passed on before the Lord, as represented by the ark.

9. The armed men went before. The soldiers took the lead as a matter of defence against possible attack. The rearward, those bringing up the rear, consisting probably of the unarmed citizens. The procession appears to have been as follows:—

(a) First, in solemn procession, were to advance armed soldiers.

(b) Then would follow seven priests blowing continually, not the customary silver trumpets, but large horns.

(c) Thus heralded, was to follow the ark of Jehovah borne by the priests.

(d) Then were to follow "the rearward" of Israel, all in perfect silence.

10. Ye shall not shout, nor make any noise . . . until the day I bid you shout. The Orientals take a peculiar delight in noise. "When our people are in dead earnest, they are generally silent; but the more in earnest an Oriental is, the louder he shouts. Even Arab boatmen, when in great danger, and every man is doing his utmost in struggling with the waves, will waste a lot of strength and breath in shouting." — *Hon. Selah Merrill*. No sign of triumph was to be raised, no words of rejoicing over the foe, nor of consciousness of strength. But in solemn, reverent silence, as if God alone were speaking

14. And the second day they compassed the city once, and returned into the camp: so they did six days.

15. And it came to pass on the seventh day, that they rose early ^a about the dawning of the day, and compassed the city after the same manner seven times: only on that day they compassed the city seven times.

16. And it came to pass at the seventh time, when the priests blew with the trumpets, Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city.

17. And the city shall ¹ be ^o accursed, *even* it, and all that ^p are therein, to the LORD: only Rahab the harlot shall live, she and all that *are* with her in the house, because ² she hid the messengers that we sent.

18. And ye, ³ in any wise keep *yourselves* from the ^o accursed thing, lest ^a ye make *yourselves* accursed, when ye take of the accursed thing, and make the camp of Israel a curse, ⁴ and trouble it.

¹ Lev. 27: 28.

² Josh. 2: 4.

Rev. Ver.: ^a at. ^o devoted. ^p is.

³ Deut. 7: 26; ¹³: 17. Josh. 7: 1, 11, 12.

⁴ Josh. 7: 25. ¹ Kings 18: 17, 18. ¹ Jonah 1: 12.

^q when ye have devoted it, ye take of the devoted thing; so should ye make the camp of Israel accursed, and.



Trumpet.
(Made from a Ram's
Horn.)

to them, in meditation and silent prayer they were to move around the city, as if engaged in a religious service.

14. **So they did six days.** Doubtless these inhabitants of Jericho made themselves merry with this sight. Wicked men think God in jest when he is preparing for their judgment. — *Bishop Hall*. "The plan no doubt exposed them to two things which men do not like, ridicule and danger. Possibly the ridicule was as hard to bear as the danger. God would protect them from the danger, but who would shield them from the ridicule?" — *Blaikie*.

On the other hand, Kitto says, "We do not, with some, think the proceeding was likely to awaken the mirth of the inhabitants of Jericho, — more likely was it to make a solemn impression upon their minds."

15. **On the seventh day.** The circuit was made seven times; an all day's service.

OBJECT OF THIS PLAN OF ATTACK. 1. To impress deeply upon the Israelites that it was the omnipotence and fidelity of Jehovah alone which could give into their hands this fortified city, the bastion of the whole land. — *Keil*. 2. To exercise Israel in unconditional faith and patient trust in the power and assistance of God. — *Keil*. 3. To show to the wicked inhabitants of Canaan that the victory was from the true God in behalf of his children and thus to be an invitation to them to become his children, and worship and obey him. So great a deliverer, so powerful a helper, one so interested in the welfare of his people, would be indeed a God worthy of their acceptance. 4. The delay also afforded time for the news of this extraordinary proceeding to spread through all the country around. — *Kitto*. And thus this deliverance, together with what was already known of God's marvels in Egypt, would make the conquest much easier.

VI. The Fall of Jericho. — Vs. 16-20. In verses 17 to 19 are interposed some directions in reference to the city to be captured, given or repeated just before the seventh circuit.

17. **The city shall be accursed**, that is, "under a ban," "devoted to destruction." Nothing was to be used for themselves or the curse would come upon them. **Only Rahab the harlot shall live.** However bad her previous conduct, she seems to have repented, and trusted in the true God, and lived a good life *Rahab*. henceforth, or she would not have been married to a leading Israelite, an ancestor of Jesus, nor her name be one of the only three women named in his genealogy. A bad past life will not prevent future usefulness and blessing, always provided that the bad is forsaken and hated, and the soul turns to a higher life.

NOTE how she showed her faith by binding the scarlet cord in her window, as told to do by the spies. Whoever saw the scarlet cord spared that house. She was safe, as were those Israelites who forty years before put the blood stains on their door posts.

19. But all the silver, and gold, and vessels of brass and iron, *are* ¹consecrated unto the LORD: they shall come into the treasury of the LORD.

20. So the people shouted ²when *the priests* blew with the trumpets: ³and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the trumpet, ⁴and the people shouted with a great shout, ⁵that ⁶the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city.

¹Heb. 11: 30.

Rev. Ver.: ² holy. ³ and. ⁴ omit and. ⁵ that.

19. The silver, etc., as being undefiled and not easily destroyed, was to be turned over to public use. It was forbidden also to rebuild the city, and a curse was laid upon whosoever should do it. The city was devoted (1) probably to show both to the Israelites and to the nations that the Israelites were not a horde of marauders, seeking for plunder, with "booty and beauty" for their war cry, but were fighting for a great cause, which really involved all humanity. (2) It was also a lesson in discipline and obedience. (3) There would be especial danger at this period that the Israelites would be contaminated by these city-bred people, with all the exciting temptations they could present.

20. So the people shouted, at the close of the seventh circuit that day, or thirteenth in all. The people stood encircling the city. The wall fell down flat. Of course the shouting and the blare of the trumpets had no power to overthrow the broad stone walls of the city; but it connected the people with the miracle in outward form to show that only as they were really connected with it by faith would the work be done for them. The secondary means, some think, to have been an earthquake, but even then it must have been miraculous in its timing, and in its limitation to the city, while the surrounding Israelites were untouched.

LESSONS. This overthrow is an illustration of certain great truths for our own day.

1. It well *illustrates* the victories which the gospel was to obtain over all the principalities and powers of earth and hell. No human force was to be used. Nothing but the simple announcement of the truth, and that by the instrumentality of weak and sinful men, was the means chosen for the destruction of idolatry and the establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom over the earth.

2. All the people shall shout in order that all may have their part in the victory. So when all Christians utter with all their might the words of Jesus, the kingdom of Satan will soon fall. By the weak things of earth God confounds the mighty (1 Cor. 1: 17-24).

3. "The circumstances which led up to the fall of Jericho are an acted prophecy, as was that fall itself, which sets forth the overthrow of the powers opposed to Christ and his cause."

4. By *faith* the walls of Jericho fell down (Heb. 11: 30). All the acts of Joshua and of the people were the fruit of faith. So by faith only will Christians conquer the world, a faith manifested in obedience to the word of our Captain.

5. We should never be dismayed at any outward obstacle or hindrance in the way of God's kingdom; nor at the seeming feebleness of the means to be used.

LIBRARY HELPS.

The Book of Joshua in the Expositor's Bible Series is excellent. So is the *Cambridge Bible for Schools*. The *Commentaries* of Cook, Bush, Keil, Lange, *Pulpit Commentary*, *Homiletical Commentary*, *The Life of Joshua*, by Deane, by Meyer, by Groser; Blaikie's *Bible History*, Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Vol. I., Cowles' *Hebrew History*.

Bunyan's *Holy War*, "The Capture of Mansoul," is a good illustration.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

The whole history, preparations, attack, and success are full of instruction. But first impress the leading points of the history. Make the scenes into pictures. The right and wrong of this invasion will be considered in the next lesson.

SUBJECT: THE GOOD FIGHT OF FAITH.

I. RELIGIOUS PREPARATION. In threefold form: (1) the renewal of the covenant, (2) religious worship, (3) an experience of the food of the new abode.

Illustration. The religious revolutions which bring political progress. See Carlyle's description of John Knox's influence in Scotland, in his *Heroes and Hero Worship*, Lect. 4, "The Revolution, whereby the meanest man becomes not a citizen only, but a member of Christ's visible church; a veritable hero, if he prove a true man. This is what I mean by 'a whole nation of heroes'; a *believing* nation."

Illustration. We guide our ships on the stormy sea by the stars of heaven, or by the needle that points to the polar star, compelled by heavenly influences.

II. THE CAPTAIN OF THE LORD'S HOST. The whole Christian warfare on earth is guided by our Leader in heaven.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT. The Captain of our Salvation (Heb. 2: 10), described in Revelation 19: 11-16; the great work of conquering our hearts (Matt. 15: 19); of conquering the world (Mark 16: 15); the power of the enemy (Eph. 6: 12).

Illustration. When Stanley (see *Across the Dark Continent*) was in the heart of Africa, slowly sailing down the Livingston River, hoping to reach the sea, Amina, the wife of one of his helpers, lay dying in her boat; and she said to Stanley, "*It is a bad world, master, and you have lost your way in it.*" Indeed, we would be lost except for our great Leader.

III. THE CITY OF JERICHO, as an illustration of the intrenched and fortified powers of evil. Take, for examples, heathenism, oppression, the hard heart of selfishness, the liquor traffic. "I want to say this deliberately. The liquor traffic is strongly intrenched. No other traffic is so. It has money power, political influence, and a great organization; but we shall overcome it. The churches will wake up some day, and when they do there will be the end." — *Neal Dow*.

IV. THE WARFARE OF FAITH (vs. 8-15). The strange method of attack, and the reasons for it.

Illustration. The people were the conductors of the divine power, as if they were conscious electric wires which must prepare themselves for this use.

EXAMPLES. "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty" (1 Cor. 1: 27). Consider what Jesus has done in the world, — without rank, or riches, or armies, or earthly power, he has changed the whole world. And among his followers, the few fishermen of Galilee, John Knox, Luther, and many others.

Who could have supposed "that the distress of a kind-hearted medical student in London for a batch of poor boys who 'didn't live nowhere,' and whose pale faces, as they lay on a cold night on the roof of a shed, stirred in him an irrepressible compassion, would give birth to one of the marvels of London philanthropy, — Dr. Barnardo's twenty institutions, caring for three to four thousand children, in connection with which the announcement could be made that no really destitute child was ever turned from its doors?" — *Blaikie*.

V. THE VICTORY OF FAITH (vs. 16-20).

Illustrations of the sudden results of forces that were silently working for a long time.

(1) The lightning flash has been preparing for a long time in the unseen gathering of electricity in clouds and earth. (2) How long a time the authorities were busy undermining Hurlgate rocks, beneath the waters. Steamboats and all manner of vessels sailed over the works in utter unconsciousness, till the little daughter of the commandant touched the electric button. (3) The same is seen in most revolutions: the French Revolution, the Reformation, the destruction of slavery. It is seen in the career of many men, as Cardinal Wolsey. In the words of an eminent English *Wolsey's Fall*. historian: "Slowly the hand had crawled along the dial plate, slowly as if the event would never come, and wrong was heaped on wrong, and oppression cried, and it seemed as if no ear had heard its voice, till the measure of the wickedness was at length fulfilled; the finger touched the hour, and as the strokes of the great hammer rang out above the nation, in an instant the mighty fabric of iniquity was shivered to ruins."

Illustration. What means God used for overthrowing the walls of Jericho no one can know. If an earthquake, the forces had been silently preparing for a long time. Others have suggested that "God knew the keynote of that wall; it was struck, and it fell." This does not seem probable, as no one ever yet has overthrown a city wall in this manner, and probably never will, but there are some very interesting illustrations of such a power. Not many evenings ago, says *Harper's Young People*, while a young lady was singing, the glass shade on a gas burner broke, frightening the singer nearly out of her wits, and, though the chandelier contained nine glass shades, the one immediately in front of where the lady stood was the only one broken. Her voice, which was loud and strong, had shattered the glass. This seems strange, but it is not less strange than true. I know a person who can

break a small tumbler of thin glass by holding it before his mouth, and making a peculiar trilling noise. While away up amid the Alpine solitudes of Switzerland a few years ago, I noticed the muleteers tied up the bells of their mules, and was told that the protracted combined tinkling would start an avalanche.

"All structures, large or small, simple or complex, have a definite rate of vibration, depending on their material, size, and shape, as fixed as the fundamental note of a musical chord." When the bridge at Colebrooke Dale (the first iron bridge in the world) was building, a fiddler came along and said he could fiddle it down. The workmen laughed in scorn, and told him to fiddle away to his heart's content. He played until he struck the key-note of the bridge, and it swayed so violently that the astonished workmen commanded him to stop. At one time considerable annoyance was experienced in one of the mills in Lowell. Some days the building was so shaken *The Key-note of Structures.* that a pail of water would be nearly emptied, while on other days all was quiet. Experiment proved it was only when the machinery was running at a certain rate that the building was disturbed. The simple remedy was in running it slower or faster, so as to put it out of time with the building. We have here the reason of the rule observed by marching armies when they cross a bridge, viz.: Stop the music, break step, and open column, lest the measured cadence of a condensed mass of men should urge the bridge to vibrate beyond its sphere of cohesion. Neglect of this has led to fearful accidents. The celebrated engineer, Stephenson, has said there is not so much danger to a bridge when crowded with men and cattle as when men go in marching order. The Broughton bridge, near Manchester, gave way beneath the measured tread of only sixty men. A terrible disaster befell a battalion of French infantry while crossing the suspension bridge at Angiers, in France. Repeated orders were given the troops to break into section, but in the hurry of the moment and in the rain they disregarded the order, and the bridge fell. — *Professor Lovering, of Cambridge.*

LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 8.

CALEB'S REWARD.—JOSHUA 14: 5-14.

Golden Text.—*He wholly followed the Lord God of Israel.* — JOSH. 14: 14.

THE SECTION includes chapters 7 to 14.

TIME.—The conquest occupied about six years, from B. C. 1451 to 1444 or 1445. Caleb's inheritance was given him at the close of the conquest.

THE PLACE of distribution was at Gilgal, near Jericho, where the first encampment was made in the promised land. Caleb's inheritance was at Hebron.

JOSHUA, the commander-in-chief, was about 90 years old at the conclusion of the conquest.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—A'chān (ā'kān); Aī; Aj'ālōn; An'ākīm; Ar'bā; Bēth-ā'ven; Cālēb, Cār'mi; E'bāl; Gēr'izim; Gib'ēōn; Gilgāl; Jēphūn'nēh; Kā'dēsh-bār'nēā; Kēn'ēzites; Kir'jāth-ār'bā; Mākkē'dāh or Māk'kēdāh; Zāb'dī; Zē'rāh.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Rights of the Conquest.—Before we enter upon the conquest of Canaan, which followed upon the fall of Jericho, it is well to place our scholars right upon the moral questions which necessarily arise. What right had the Israelites to drive out the Canaanites, to destroy them, and to take possession of their lands and homes?

FIRST. THE CANAANITES HAD FORFEITED THEIR RIGHTS. (1) Their destruction is always presented in Scripture as a judgment of God sent on them because of their wickedness. They had not only fallen into total apostasy from God, but into forms of idolatry of the most degrading kind. Their false religion cannot be regarded as a mere error of judgment; cruelty the most atrocious and unnatural crimes the most defiling were part and parcel of its observances (compare Lev. 18: 21, 25 sqq.; Deut. 12: 30 sqq.). — *Cook.* The heathenism of Palestine and Syria was so foul and degrading that there is no State, even at this time, which would not put it down, if necessary, by the severest penalties. Its spread

to Rome was bewailed 1500 years later by the satirists of the day, as a calamity marking the utter decay of the times (Juvenal, *Satires*, III., 62). — *Geikie*. Nor did they sin thus through ignorance. They were not a savage race, but among the more cultivated ones of the time. They had commerce, coined money, iron chariots, probably books. (2) The Canaanites had received repeated warnings and instructions. Abraham and the patriarchs had lived among them. They knew something of God's dealings in behalf of his people. To them, as to all, shone the primitive revelation, and the voices of God in their consciences and in nature. God bore with them with infinite patience. (3) If God had not destroyed them they would have destroyed themselves by their own corruption, but not till they had injured many others by their example and influence. This very destruction was more merciful than would have been the sufferings which would naturally flow from their character and conduct. (4) It can make no difference to those who are thus destroyed whether the agent of their destruction be a natural catastrophe, like an earthquake, the flood, the overthrow of Sodom, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; or by an army divinely commissioned for the purpose; except that their gradual destruction by the servants of God, through marvellous miracles, was a continual invitation to them to repent, as well as a warning to the world against their sins.

SECOND. IT WAS WISE TO USE THE ISRAELITES AS THE DIVINE INSTRUMENTS.

(1) This land was the best place in which to train up a peculiar and separate people in the true religion. It was isolated. It was small, yet it was centrally situated for the spread of truth over the world. It had every variety of climate and of soil. It required labor to cultivate it, but bore fruit generously in response to toil. All these things afforded special advantages for accomplishing the divine purpose as to this people. (2) The inhabitants must be destroyed, or they would destroy the kingdom of God in Israel. If the few who were spared contrary to orders exerted so baleful an influence, what would have been the result if a large body had remained? (3) What the Israelites did was not for themselves alone. "The Israelites' sword wrought a work of mercy for all the countries of the earth to the very end of the world"; on it "the happiness of the human race depended." — *Dr. Arnold*. "If the Jews had failed, the world would have been lost. The true religion would have vanished, the mission of Christ would have been impossible. In these contests, on the fate of one of these nations of Palestine, the happiness of the human race depended." — *Stanley*. The nearest modern example is seen in the contrast between what this country is now in its influence upon the world and what it would have been had the Indians remained the sole inhabitants; and this without condoning a single injustice or cruelty to the native race. They should have been conquered to civilization and religion only by justice and love, as, in fact, was done in many cases. (4) The Israelites simply executed a lawful sentence against crime. It was no more cruelty than it is for the appointed officers to execute a criminal in our day. (5) "To employ the Israelites in the execution of the fearful sentence was adapted to inspire them with horror of the crimes thus severely punished, and to prevent their intimacy with the surrounding heathen and the contamination which intimacy would have produced." — *Fr. Johnson*. Thus it was that this conquest was necessary to the planting in the world and for the world the love and service of the true God and the purest morality and love toward men.

II. **The Defeat at Ai and its Effects.** — Chaps. 7 and 8: 1-29. Immediately after the fall of Jericho, Joshua proceeded to subdue the next stronghold, the city of Ai, fifteen or twenty miles west of Jericho, in the highlands near Bethel. Here, unexpectedly, his army met with a defeat. It was a crushing blow, and unaccountable. The elders of Israel bowed in humiliation and prayer. Then it was learned that Achan had committed sin by transgressing the positive command of God in relation to the spoils of Jericho. The guilty one was discovered by lot. He was condemned and executed. Then, by a wise use of means, victory was gained, and the conquest went on.

LESSONS. 1. This defeat taught the Israelites most impressively the absolute necessity of obedience to God. They were growing too self-confident, as if they need not make special exertions, but the Lord would give them success, anyway. God showed them that he could not fulfil his part of the covenant unless they fulfilled theirs. There can be no success without obedience to God. This was a lesson for all time, but frequently repeated in their experience. Thus, the Battle of Bunker Hill was a defeat, yet we celebrate it, and build a monument for it, because this defeat was worth more than a victory.

2. Note how manifold was Achan's sin. Sins are almost always **Sociality of Sin.** social; they go in clans and families, so that when we commit one sin, others almost necessarily accompany or cluster around it. Achan (1) was covetous; he broke the Tenth Commandment. (2) He loved riches better than God, and thus

he broke the first. (3) He stole (the eighth). (4) Through his crime thirty-six men were slain (the sixth).

3. One man's sin brought calamity upon a nation. There is a unity, a solidarity in a nation, so that no individual can sin to himself alone. Generally one man's crime is the outbreaking of tendencies which pervade the nation, and therefore all the nation are in a degree partakers of the sin. An aching tooth, an inflamed organ, a diseased limb makes the whole body sick. As Paul says, "If one member suffer, all the members suffer with it." The same holds true of any organized body of men, — a family, a school, a church, a town, a nation.

4. The punishment was so severe because: (1) It was a terrible sin: (a) it was a wilful disobedience; (b) it was high treason against God; (c) it was sacrilege; (d) it was stealing, lying, coveting, and practically murder. (2) This sin struck at the very life of the nation. If the people could disobey God with impunity, the nation would soon be ruined, and the hope of the world be put out. We have many instances in the history of the middle ages, whose methods of warfare were almost identical with those of Joshua, in which the conquerors were utterly cut to pieces, because they gave themselves up to license after victory. — *Johnson*. (3) The course Achan took would have degraded God in the eyes of Israel and of the Gentiles. The people and cities of Canaan were rich; the Israelites were poor. Canaan had the resources of a somewhat high civilization; gold, silver, vessels of brass and of iron; goodly Babylonish garments — all dazzling before the eyes of a people forty years in a barren wilderness. Now, suppose the Lord had given them free license to plunder, to steal, and hide, and appropriate all they could lay hands on! This movement for the conquest of Canaan would have become a savage, plundering, marauding expedition, not a whit above the demoralizing wars of all barbarous tribes upon nations largely in advance of themselves in wealth and luxury. — *Cowles*. *Valley of Achor, a Door of Hope.*

5. One of the most interesting references to this event is that of Hosea 2: 15, where it is said to the people of his day that the valley of Achor (where Achan was burned) should be a door of hope. Putting away Achan's sin was a door to victory. Through this valley the Jews returned from exile in Babylon, when they had put away idolatry forever, and rebuilt their temple and city.

III. **The Covenant Renewed.** — Chap. 8: 30-35. The way was now open to proceed to Shechem and renew the covenant, as Moses in his farewell address had commanded them (Deut. 27: 1-14). Half of the tribes were arranged on Mount Ebal, and the other six on Mount Gerizim. The law in substance was written plainly before them on plastered stones. Then in that wonderfully clear air was read in the hearing of the people the law of Moses; and from Gerizim the blessings that would follow obedience, and from Ebal the curses that would follow disobedience (Deut. 27-30). Thus was another safeguard placed around the Israelites and another effort made to train them in obedience, that they might enjoy the blessings of the Promised Land.

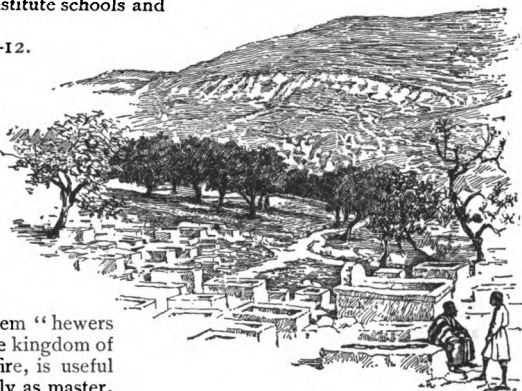
A special reason for this, which we are apt to forget, is that very few could read, very few could have written copies of the law, even if they could read them. Some such method as the above was absolutely necessary in order to keep the law in the minds of the people, till they could settle down in peace, and institute schools and regular Sabbath worship.

IV. **The Conquest.** — Chaps. 9-12.

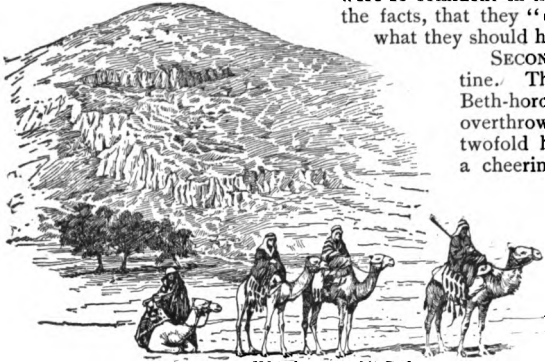
FIRST comes the story of the submission of the inhabitants of Gibeon, an important city about six miles northwest of Jerusalem, and six or seven south of Bethel. From this story we can gather two practical thoughts: (1)

that in gaining *Stratagem of Gibeonites.*

the victory over our own souls, sometimes worldly things present themselves in disguise; and that the only way to utilize them is by making them "hewers of wood and drawers of water" for the kingdom of God in the soul. Many a thing, like fire, is useful as a servant, but dangerous and deadly as master. (2) The Israelites were deceived, because they



Mount Ebal.



Mount Gerizim.

were so confident in their own judgment, so clear seemed the facts, that they "did not inquire of the Lord" as to what they should have done.

SECOND. The conquest of Southern Palestine. The nations gathered in great force at Beth-horon, where the immense army was overthrown by great courage and by special twofold help from God. It must have been a cheering sight to Caleb and Joshua, when the great strongholds, so feared by the other spies forty years before, fell so easily one after another. The most noteworthy incident in this part of the campaign was the battle of Beth-horon, "one of the most important battles in the history of the world," worthy of the prolonging of the day in order that the victory might be complete, at the command of Joshua.

"Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon
And thou, Moon, in the Valley of Ajalon."

Some think this a poetical expression, for it seems to be a recognized poem from the book of Jasher, apparently a collection of poems or songs about Hebrew heroes, from which David taught the children of Israel "The Song of the Bow" (2 Sam. 1: 18). In this case it would be like *the stars fighting* against Sisera (Judg. 5: 20), *the melting down* of the mountains (Isa. 34: 3; Mic. 1: 4), *the skipping of Lebanon* (Psa. 29: 6), *the rending of the heavens* (Isa. 64: 1). Others believe that an "extraordinary refraction of the sunlight, a parheliion or some similar natural phenomenon, might have produced the desired prolongation." If Edersheim's translation is correct, "Hasted not to go—like (as on) a complete day," this explanation would suffice. But the Bible implies that it was a miracle, and a stupendous one; and no more difficult to believe than others that are recorded. There certainly is nothing in the objection raised that "if the rotation of the earth on its axis were suddenly arrested, all human beings on its surface and all loose objects whatever must have been flung forward with prodigious violence; just as, on a small scale, on the sudden stoppage of a carriage, we find ourselves thrown forward, the motion of the carriage having been communicated to our bodies." For the action of a force like gravity would stop the motion of the earth around its axis in ten or twelve minutes so imperceptibly that not even a leaf on the tree would be shaken. There is nothing said about the earth being stopped suddenly, as a railroad train striking another in disastrous shock.

**Sun Standing
Still.**

This day shall shine
To thee a star divine,

Forevermore
On Time's dark shore.

—Proctor.

THIRD. The conquest in the North, where the assembled armies were defeated near the waters of Merom, north of the Sea of Galilee.

LESSONS. 1. We must take heed not to judge the Israelites by our circumstances, or by our light on moral questions. If we do, we shall either misrepresent them, or mislead ourselves.

2. "Whether we justify (Joshua) or not, there remains one permanent lesson,—the duty of keeping alive in the human heart the sense of burning indignation against moral evil,—against selfishness, against injustice, against untruth, in ourselves as well as in others."—Stanley. "To prevent this (petrification) only one specific is known to man, and that is to be constantly in campaign against the evils of the world. One of the great uses of the devil is to keep the church from the lethargy that ends in death."—William H. Stead.

3. We learn a lesson concerning the conquest of the promised land of our own souls. It is to be won, every inch of it, with marvellous divine help, but also by hard battles and persevering courage. Sin has no right there and we must drive it out in all its forms. "There are those who sigh for holiness and beauty of character, but they are not willing to

5. As ¹ the LORD commanded Moses, so the children of Israel did, and they divided the land.

6. Then the children of Judah ^a came unto Joshua in Gilgal: and Caleb the son of Jephunneh ² the ^b Kenezite said unto him, Thou knowest ³ the thing that the LORD ^c said unto Moses the man of God concerning me ^d and thee in ⁴ Kadesh-barnea.

7. Forty years old *was* I when Moses the servant of the LORD ^e sent me from Kadesh-barnea to ^e spy out the land; and I brought him word again as *it was* in mine heart.

8. Nevertheless ^f my brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt: but I ⁷ wholly followed the LORD my God.

¹ Num. 35: 2. Josh. 21: 2.

² Num. 32: 12. Josh. 15: 17.

³ Num. 14: 24, 30. Deut. 1: 36, 38.

⁴ Num. 13: 26.

⁵ Num. 13: 6; 14: 6.

⁶ Num. 13: 31, 32. Deut. 1: 28.

⁷ Num. 14: 24. Deut. 1: 36.

Rev. Ver.: *a* drew nigh. *e* spy.

b Kenizzite.

c spake.

d and concerning.

pay the price. They sing 'More holiness give me,' and dream of some lofty spiritual attainment, some transfiguration, but they are not willing to endure the toils, fight the battles, and make the self-sacrifices necessary to win these celestial heights. They want a larger spiritual inheritance, but they have no thought of taking it in primeval forests which their own hands must cut down." — *John R. Miller*.

4. The whole world is to be conquered for Christ. Not an enemy is to be left. But it is to be conquered by spiritual, not carnal weapons, and by the wonderful power of the Holy Spirit. The victory does not destroy men, but sins, and crimes, and bad customs, and wicked feelings, transforming and blessing the people by the conquest.

"The life-long battle with all evil things
Is the war of giants and of kings."

V. **The Division of the Land.** — Chaps. 13 and 14: 1-5. Finally, at the close of six or seven years' war, the land was so far subdued that it could be divided among the nine and one half tribes who settled west of the Jordan, the other two and one half tribes having already received their portion on the east of Jordan. It was assigned by lot at a great assembly at Gilgal. Each family had its farm with an absolute title. It could be alienated for a time, but at the end of every fifty years there was to be a restoration to each family of the family portion. This did not include city property. Thus perpetual poverty was excluded from the family; yet each person suffered for neglect and idleness, and was rewarded for diligence.

VI. **Caleb's Inheritance.** — Chap. 14: 6-15. 6. The children of Judah, representatives of Caleb's tribe, as friends to his claim, or to take part in the general distribution. Gilgal, near Jericho, where was the first encampment in Canaan. Caleb the son of Jephunneh the Kenezite. That is, a descendant of Kenaz, the son of Esau. Hence his family were probably proselytes. "Their faith was preëminently the fruit of conviction, and not the accident of heredity. It had a firmer basis than that of most Israelites. It was woven more closely into the texture of their being, and swayed their lives more powerfully. It is pleasing to think that there may have been many such proselytes; that the promise to Abraham may have attracted souls from the east, and the west, and the north, and the south" (a foretaste of the glorious fulfilment yet to come). — *Blaikie*.

Caleb is one of those men whom we meet with seldom in Bible *Caleb*. history, but whenever we do meet them we are the better for the meeting. Bright and brave, strong, modest, and cheerful, there is honesty in his face, courage and decision in the very pose of his body, and the calm confidence of faith in his very look and attitude. — *Blaikie*.

7. **Forty years old.** Therefore he was now about eighty-five. Kadesh-barnea, etc. (See Lesson V.) I brought him word again as it was in mine heart. Under trying circumstances he spoke out sincerely and bravely, because his heart was sincere and courageous. But I wholly followed the Lord: *Manliness of Godliness*. by being true to his convictions, by putting his trust in God, and remembering all the wonderful deeds he had done, and believing the promises he had made. Caleb was so strong and manly because "he wholly followed the Lord." What a charm there is in *manliness*, — in its vigor, its honesty, in its fortitude and

9. And Moses swore on that day, saying, ¹ Surely the land ² whereon thy ³ feet have trodden shall ⁴ be thine inheritance, and thy children's forever, because thou hast wholly followed the LORD my God.

10. And now, behold, the LORD hath kept me alive ⁵ as he ⁶ said, these forty and five years, ⁷ even since the LORD spake this word unto Moses, while ⁸ the children of Israel ⁹ wandered in the wilderness: and now, lo, I ¹⁰ am this day fourscore and five years old.

11. ¹¹ As yet I ¹² am as strong this day as I ¹³ was in the day that Moses sent me: as my strength ¹⁴ was then, even so ¹⁵ is my strength now, for war, ¹⁶ both to go ¹⁷ out, and to come in.

12. Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the LORD spake in that day; for thou heardest in that day how ¹⁸ the Anakim ¹⁹ were there, and ²⁰ that the cities ²¹ were great and fenced: ²² if so be ²³ the LORD ²⁴ will be with me, ²⁵ then I ²⁶ shall be able to drive them out, as the LORD ²⁷ said.

¹ Num. 14: 23, 24. Deut. 1: 36. Josh. 1: 3.

⁵ Deut. 31: 2. ⁶ Num. 13: 28, 33.

Rev. Ver.: *f* foot hath.

k walked.

² Num. 13: 22.

⁷ Psa. 18: 32, 34; 60: 12. Rom. 8: 31.

g be an inheritance to thee and to thy children.

i and.

³ Num. 14: 30.

⁸ Josh. 15: 14. Judg. 1: 20.

k spake.

m and cities great.

⁴ See Deut. 34: 7.

i from the time that.

n it may be that.

j omit the children of.

o and.

p spake.

daring. We all need this quality, men and women. More manliness would mean less falseness, less failure, less wretchedness of apprehension, more enterprise, and grand success. And godliness begets it. — *R. Glover.*

9. **Moses swore on that day, saying.** This promise is recorded in Numbers 14: 24; Deuteronomy 1: 36. Surely the land whereon thy feet have trodden shall be thine inheritance. Forty-five years before he had gone into this land, and it had been promised him. He had, as it were, taken the deed of the land, but not taken possession. Why was the fulfilment so long delayed? Because its fulfilment *Delayed Blessings.* before this would have been of no use to him, or worse than useless.

He could not have enjoyed the land till it was conquered by the Israelites. So the fulfilment of many a promise has been delayed, because we were not prepared to receive it, or it would have been no blessing had it come sooner. The delay also is a test of our faith, to prove whether we will wholly follow the Lord. Only to such can the best blessings come.

10. **The Lord hath kept me alive.** As he promised. One promise fulfilled gave the assurance that the other would be.

11. **Yet I am as strong this day as I was.** Spoken to give assurance that he could take possession of the land.

12. **Now therefore give me this mountain:** not a particular mountain, but the mountainous region in which Hebron was situated. Hebron is the highest city of Southern Palestine, being six hundred feet higher than Jerusalem, and two thousand six hundred feet above the Mediterranean. — *Johnson.* The Anakim (a race of giants) were there, and that the cities were great and fenced: fortified with strong walls. These things are mentioned because it shows how great his faith was that in the presence of the seemingly insurmountable difficulties he could believe the promise of God to overcome them. If so be the Lord will be with me: not expressing doubt, but a statement of the only means by which he could succeed. I shall be able to drive them out. His faith had not diminished. He believed forty-five years before, and he still believed in God's promise and help. His whole experience during those years tended to strengthen his faith.

"ANAKIM" IN OUR INHERITANCE. Some of the highest blessings are fenced about with the greatest difficulties. 1. No earthly inheritance is without its peculiar disadvantages. Some of the "Anakim" which resist us in our efforts to fulfil our mission are (a) the evil in our own heart, e.g., indolence, fear, earthliness; (b) the temptations of the world, arising from bad examples, customs, distracting pleasures; (c) direct hindrance in persecution and opposition, growing out of the world's ignorance, prejudice, envy, etc. 2. Nevertheless it is best for us, as it was for Caleb, to have such an inheritance. Difficulties (a) try our faith and courage; (b) give scope for energy and devotion; (c) make the ultimate peace the more blessed. 3. Apply these truths (a) to private life; (b) to church work and the difficulties in evangelizing the world; (c) to public interests, and the hindrances which stay the progress of liberty, civilization, and national prosperity. — *W. F. Adency.*

13. And Joshua ¹ blessed him, and ² gave unto Caleb the son of Jephunneh [†] Hebron for an inheritance.

14. ³ Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb the son of Jephunneh the [†] Kenezite unto this day; because that he wholly followed the LORD [‡] God of Israel.

¹ Josh. 22: 6.

³ Josh. 21: 12.

Rev. Ver.: *g* he gave Hebron.

[†] Kenizzite.

² Josh. 10: 37; 15: 13. Judg. 1: 20. 1 Chron. 6: 55, 56.

[†] omit Hebron.

[‡] the God.

[‡] Therefore Hebron.

13. And Joshua blessed him: joined with his gratitude for the courageous declaration, an expression of his good wishes, and prayer for the success of his undertaking.—*Lange*. Hebron for an inheritance. Many historical associations clustered about this place, and gave added interest to its possession.

14. Unto this day, when the book was written, or revised at some later date.

LESSONS. 1. A youth well spent usually leads to a happy old age, while a youth spent in rebellion against God usually leads to premature death, or to an age full of pain and penury.—*Johnson*.

2. Faithfulness in early life reaps a large reward in later years. There is no greater mistake than to imagine that indolence, carelessness, "wild oats," in youth can lead to a successful life. "Whatsoever a man soweth THAT shall he also reap."

3. "Wholly following the Lord" is the way to noble character, large usefulness, and true success.

4. Only that can be ours "which our feet tread upon." There is much we wish, dream about, hope for, which never becomes ours to enjoy, because we do not take possession of it.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

The *Commentaries* and *Works on Joshua* are the same as those noted in our last lesson. The right of the Israelites to take the land of Canaan is discussed in Kitto's *Daily Bible Illustrations*, Vol. II; in Canon Cook's *Bible Commentary*, in the introduction to the book of Joshua; briefly in Geikie's *Hours with the Bible* and excellently in Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Vol. I., "The Battle of Beth-horon." Josephus' *Antiquities*, IV., 5, 6, 7, gives Jewish traditions. Milton's description of the Canaanite idols, in *Paradise Lost*. Milton took the names of Syrian idols to represent the evil spirits of "Pandemonium." Arnold's *Sermons*, VI., "Wars of the Israelites."

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

It would seem to be wise to take a general view of the whole history of the conquest and its lessons, as well as of the special incident selected. Many points of great interest can thus be touched upon.

SUBJECT: THE CONQUEST.

I. THE LAND AND THE RIGHT TO IT. As in *Explanatory*. Remove the moral objections, and impress its Christian applications. Jesus Christ has a right to our souls, and to the world. Why sins should be driven out.

II. SOME AIDS TO SUCCESS. Two are especially noted in the Defeat through Sin, and the Renewal of the Covenant. Lessons from defeat, and power of holding the land through the continual teaching of the word of God.

Illustrations. The famous battle at Thermopylæ was a defeat, but was a glorious moral victory. Longfellow's *Ladder of St. Augustine*.

Illustration. Governor Seymour, of New York, once said in an address that if God should give him permission to live his life over again, and put in the new life whatever he chose from the old life, he might leave out some of his pleasures, but he would not dare to leave out one trial, or difficulty, or hard place.

III. THE LONG WARFARE. *Illustration*. *Hailstones at Beth-horon*. "In 1859 a very similar disaster overtook the Austrians at the battle of Solferino. Commodore Porter describes a hailstorm on the Bosphorus in 1831, while he was crossing in a boat. One of the boatmen had his hand literally smashed, a second was much injured in the shoulder, and

the others were all more or less hurt. One hailstone broke the blade of an oar. Two men were killed on shore, and many had limbs broken. Some of the pieces of ice picked up were over a pound in weight, and many three quarters of a pound." — *Geikie*.

Illustration. "When Procopius was in Africa in the army of Belisarius, two pillars of white marble were pointed out to him near Tangier, bearing an inscription in Phœnician characters: 'We are they that fled from before the robber Joshua, the son of Nun.' The genuineness or even the antiquity of the monument may be more than doubtful; but it shows the belief which lingered amongst the remnants of the Phœnician colony in Africa." See Rawlinson's *Bampton Lectures*, p. 381. In the Talmud it is said that "Joshua made three proclamations. (1) Whosoever wishes to escape death shall leave Palestine of his own free will. (2) Whosoever wishes to conclude peace with us shall be received amicably. (3) Whosoever wishes for war, he shall have war. Thereupon one part emigrated to Africa; another asked for peace, and thirty-one kings made war and were conquered." — *Stanley*.

IV. THE REWARDS OF FAITHFULNESS. The land distributed among the tribes. Caleb's inheritance.

Illustration. In the charming little booklet, *Expectation Corner*, Adam Slowman was led into the Lord's treasure houses, and among many other wonders there revealed to him was the *Delayed Blessings Office*, where God kept certain things prayed for until the wise time came to send them. "It takes a long time for some pensioners to learn that *delays are not denials*. . . . Ah, there are secrets of love and wisdom in the 'Delayed Blessings Department' which are little dreamt of. Men would pluck their mercies green when the Lord would have them ripe." *Therefore the Lord will wait, that he may be gracious unto you* (Isa. 30: 18).

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT. Following God with all the heart (Matt. 22: 37; Rom. 8: 16; 12: 1). Religion is best for this life as well as the next (Matt. 6: 33). Our inheritance (Rom. 8: 17; Matt. 7: 11; 1 Tim. 4: 8; Eph. 6: 3). The "Anakim" in our inheritance (Eph. 6: 12; 1 John 2: 15, 16; Luke 21: 34). The means of victory (1 John 5: 4; Rom. 8: 37-39).

LESSON XI. — SEPTEMBER 15.

THE CITIES OF REFUGE. — JOSHUA 20: 1-9.

Golden Text. — *Who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us.* — **HEB. 6: 18.**

THE SECTION includes only the lesson, with a consideration of its setting in the midst of the allotment of Canaan among the tribes. Also Numbers 35: 11-34 and Deuteronomy 19: 2-13.

TIME. — B. C. 1444; not long after the last lesson.

PLACE. — Shiloh (*place of rest*, chap. 19: 51). The religious capital of Israel, near the center of Palestine. It is seventeen miles north of Jerusalem, on the road between Bethel and Shechem, and about half way between them, the distance being nine or ten miles from each. Here was the tabernacle and the ark, so that Shiloh was the center of the nation. Joshua lived here. Afterwards it was the residence of Eli and Samuel. The ark remained here for three hundred years, during the whole period of the Judges. Its modern name is Seilun. Shechem was the political capital.

JOSHUA, now about ninety years old, was still at the head of the nation.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Ar'bà; Bā'shān; Bē'zēr; Gil'ēād; Gō'ēl (gō'āl); Gō'lān; Kā'dēsh; Kir'jāth-Ar'bà; Nāph'tālī; Rā'mōth; Shē'chem.

EXPLANATORY.

I. Religious Arrangements. — 1. It will be noticed that the tribe of Levi has no section of the land assigned to it. To this tribe forty-eight cities were allotted, pretty evenly distributed among the tribes, averaging four to each tribe, and in place of land to cultivate they were to receive for their support a tithe of all the produce of the land. This arrange-

ment was for the purpose of leaving them free to give their whole time to the religious and educational work of the nation. This was especially important in those times when few could read, and there were few books to be read. The principle was much the same as when we now support pastors and teachers. They are not really paid wages, but are supported by the people, that their time may be wholly given to the work.

2. The religious capital was Shiloh. Here the tribes were to assemble three times a year, spending a week in celebrating each festival. These feasts were of great value in many ways. They bound the tribes in political and social unity. They gave the people annual vacations, lest they should become sordid, like the man with the muck rake. They promoted the religious life, keeping ever before the people the great things God had done for them, and awakening religious emotions and resolves. They preserved the unity of the faith. They promoted education, giving young and old the advantage of travel among scenes whose associations were a school of history, bringing all the good of the past into the present. They promoted friendly intercourse, and distributed information through the country at a time when the transmission of news was slow and imperfect. They imported into remote provincial districts a practical knowledge of all improvements in arts and sciences. They enlarged the general stock of knowledge by bringing many minds and great variety of taste together.

3. The plan for the punishment and restraint of crime, by means of cities of refuge, as described in the verses selected for to-day's lesson.

II. **The Avenger of Blood.**—There are some crimes that must be removed if a nation would exist and prosper. Such are treason, which strikes at the life of the nation, and murder, which strikes at the existence of the family as well as of the individual. From the earliest times these crimes have been punished most severely, and ought to be. When there was no strong general government, but small tribes with no authority over them to appeal to, these tribes, or the relatives of the murdered person, were compelled themselves to punish the murderer, who was naturally, in most cases, the member of another tribe. There was no one else to do it. Hence, in very early ages, there grew up the custom of blood avenging. "Prior to the Mosaic age, it was required of the nearest of kin, as a matter of duty, to avenge the death of a slain relative. He was called the *Goel* or *Avenger*, and together with his office inherited the property of the deceased. Sometimes a whole family took upon them this duty (2 Sam. 14: 7). Among the Arab tribes of the present day 'any bloodshed whatever, whether wilful or accidental, laid the homicide open to the *duteous* revenge of the relatives and family of the slain person, who again in their turn were then similarly watched and hunted by the opposite party, until a family war of extermination had legally settled itself from generation to generation, without the least prospect of a peaceful termination.'"—*Cambridge Bible*. Similar customs obtain in Persia, Abyssinia, and among the Druses and Circassians, as also they obtained among the Hindoos and the ancient Germans and Anglo-Saxons.

In Ireland, for instance, it is not so long ago since one of these blood-feuds in the County Tipperary had acquired such formidable proportions that the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church there were compelled to resort to a mission in order to put an end to it. A man had been killed nearly a century before in an affray which commenced about the age of a colt. His relatives felt bound to avenge the murder, and their vengeance was again deemed to require fresh vengeance, until faction fights between the "Three-Year-Olds" and the "Four-Year-Olds" had grown almost into petty wars. A thrilling story written by the late Prosper Mérimée turns upon the Corsican *vendetta*, and so true is this story to life that in the very year (1879) in which these words were written an occurrence precisely similar, save in its termination, was reported in the daily journals to have taken place in that island. The only way in which the feud could be terminated was by summoning the representatives of the two families before the authorities and exacting an oath from them that they would cease their strife. — *Pulpit Commentary*.

Dr. Trumbull, in his *Blood Covenant*, thinks that the *Goel* was rather a redeemer, a restorer, a balancer. His duty was not to revenge, but to secure justice to the injured, and to restore, as it were, a normal balance to the disturbed family relatives. In the case of loss of life he had the responsibility of securing to the family an equivalent of that loss, by other blood, or by an agreed payment for its value. His mission was not vengeance, but equity. All through the east there are regular fixed tariffs for blood cancelling. Throughout Arabia, and Syria, and in various parts of Africa, the first question to be considered in any case of unlawful blood shedding is, whether the loss of life shall be restored or balanced by blood,

*Danger from Blood
Revenge.*

In Ireland.

In Corsica.

1. ^a The LORD also spake unto Joshua, saying,
2. Speak to the children of Israel, saying, ^b Appoint out for you ¹ cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses :
3. That the ^c slayer that killeth *any* person ^d unawares *and* unwittingly may flee thither : and they shall be ^e your refuge from the avenger of blood.
4. ^f And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities ^g shall stand at the entering of the ² gate of the city, and ^h shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city, ⁱ they shall take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

¹ Ex. 21: 13. Num. 35: 6, 11, 14. Deut. 19: 2, 9.

² Ruth 4: 1, 2.

Rev. Ver.: ^a and the LORD spake.

^b Assign you the cities.

^c manslayer.

^d unwittingly and unawares.

^e unto you for a refuge.

^f and he shall flee unto.

^g and shall.

^h omit shall. ⁱ and they.

or by some equivalent of blood. Though it is true, still, in some instances all money payment for blood is refused; but the avowed motive in such a case is the holding of life as above price — the very idea which the Mosaic law emphasized. — *H. C. Trumbull.*

THE DANGER of this plan of punishing crime was that justice would give place to revenge, and a series of mutual retaliations would end in increasing murders instead of preventing them. To avoid this danger the plan of cities of refuge was instituted; while at the same time the sacredness of human life was upheld in the highest degree.

III. The Cities of Refuge. — Vs. 1, 2, 7, 8. 2. **Appoint out for you cities of refuge.** In circumstances like these it was absolutely necessary that there should be places where the refugee, falsely accused, should have the right of asylum, and where he would be safe from all pursuers. "Among the ancient heathen this *jus asyli*, or right of shelter and impunity, was enjoyed by certain places reputed sacred, such as groves, temples, and altars." These were so carefully guarded that not even a bird could be molested in these sacred precincts. A man has been reported to have been slain for killing a bird in a place of refuge. "Among the Greeks and Romans the number of these places became in process of time very great, and led, by abuse, to a fresh increase of criminals. Among the Jews the cities of refuge bore some resemblance to the asylum of the classic nations, but were happily exempt from the evil consequences to which reference has been made." — *J. R. Beard.* **Whereof I spake unto you by the hand** (the agency) **of Moses.** See Numbers 35:9-34; Deuteronomy 19: 1-3.

THE EVIL CONSEQUENCES AVOIDED. The evil consequences which might follow from the right of asylum were avoided by the plan of the cities of refuge, (1) because the cities of refuge did not shelter a wilful murderer, but the authorities, after a fair trial, were to deliver him up (Deut. 19: 11-13). The surer the punishment, the fewer the criminals. (2) Because no money, as among Bedouins and Arabs, **No Price for Murder.** and as allowed by the Romans, could buy off the wilful murderer (Num. 35: 31, 32). Thus the Jewish law showed a just regard for human life and put the poor on the same footing as the rich. No pity, no money could shelter the murderer; so only "would it be well with them." So only will it be well with us. On the other hand, the cities of refuge were an institution of mercy, saving any one who had accidentally killed another from being executed as a murderer. Such an one would have a refuge, a fair trial, and yet suffer such consequences of his deed as would make him careful in regard to his neighbor's safety. Thus the community would be safe, and the evils of blood revenge running through generations would be avoided.

THE CITIES CHOSEN. There were six cities appointed for this purpose, three on either side of the Jordan, almost equally remote from each other.

(a) ON THE WEST.

1. *Kedesh*, in Naphtali.

2. *Shechem*, in Mount Ephraim.

3. *Hebron*, in Judah.

(b) ON THE EAST.

1. *Golan*, in Bashan.

2. *Ramoth-Gilead*, in Gad.

3. *Bezer*, in Reuben.

It requires only to look at the map to see how wisely these spots were marked out, so as to make a city of refuge easy of access from all parts of the land. They were chosen, it will be observed, out of the priestly and Levitical cities, as likely to be inhabited by the most intelligent part of the community. — *Cambridge Bible.*

5. ¹ And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not ¹ deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbor ^k unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

6. And he shall dwell in that city, ² until he stand before the congregation for judgment, ¹ and until the death of the high priest that shall be in those days: then shall the ^m slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

7. And they ² appointed ³ Kedesh in Galilee in ^o mount Naphtali, and ⁴ Shechem in ^o mount Ephraim, ⁵ and ^p Kirjath-arba, which *is* Hebron, ⁶ in ^o the mountain of Judah.

8. And ^q on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned ⁷ Bezer in the wilderness ^r upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and ⁸ Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and ⁹ Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

¹ Num. 35: 12.	⁵ Josh. 14: 15; 21: 11, 13.	Rev. Ver.: <i>j</i> deliver up the man-	<i>o</i> the hill country of.
² Num. 35: 12, 25.	⁶ Luke 1: 39.	slayer into.	<i>p</i> Kirjath-arba (the
³ Josh. 21: 32.	⁷ Deut. 4: 43. Josh. 21: 36.	<i>k</i> unawares.	same is Hebron).
¹ Chron. 6: 76.	¹ Chron. 6: 78.	<i>l</i> omit and.	<i>q</i> beyond the Jordan
⁴ Josh. 21: 21.	⁸ Josh. 21: 38. ¹ Kings 22: 3.	<i>m</i> manslayer.	at.
² Chron. 10: 1.	⁹ Josh. 21: 27.	<i>n</i> set apart.	<i>r</i> in.

7. **Kedesh** (holy) was the most northerly in the tribe of Naphtali. Its modern name is *Kades*. It is ten miles north of Safed, and four to the northwest of the upper part of the Sea of Merom. *Mount*, mountainous or hilly region.

8. **Bezer**. The most southerly of the cities of refuge east of the Jordan, twelve miles northeast of Heshbon. **In the wilderness**. A wild, uncultivated, but not uninhabited region. **Ramoth in Gilead** (heights of Gilead). One of the great fortresses east of the Jordan, twenty-five miles from the river, and thirteen miles south of the Jabbok, in the tribe of Gad. **Gilead**. The mountainous region east of the Jordan, extending some sixty miles from the Dead Sea to the Lake of Galilee. Bounded on the east by the Arabian plateau, and on the west by the Jordan. **Golan** was the most northerly city chosen on the east of the Jordan. Its very site is now unknown, though once a place of great power and influence, which gave its name to a province *Gaulanitis*, east of Galilee. — *Cambridge Bible*. **Bashan**. It extended from Gilead to Hermon, and from the Jordan valley to Salchah.

► **ADAPTATION TO THEIR PURPOSE**. (1) They were so situated, three on each side of the Jordan, as to present the easiest access from all parts of the country. (2) Roads were to be built to all these cities (Deut. 19: 3), and, according to the Jewish Rabbins, the roads leading to the cities of refuge were to be kept in good repair.

The legislator took means to make the condition of the manslayer less *Aids to Flight*. happy than it was before the act or the mischance, lest entire impunity

might lead to the neglect of necessary precaution and care. With great propriety, therefore, was the homicide made to feel some legal inconvenience. According to the Rabbins, in order to give the fugitive all possible advantage in his flight, it was the business of the Sanhedrim to make the roads that led to the cities of refuge convenient, by enlarging them and removing every obstruction that might hurt his foot or hinder his speed. No hillock was left, no river was allowed over which there was not a bridge, and the road was at least two and thirty cubits broad. At every turning there were posts erected bearing the words, *Refuge, Refuge*, to guide the unhappy man in his flight; and two students in the law were appointed to accompany him, that, if the avenger should overtake him before he reached the city, they might attempt to pacify him till the legal investigation could take place. — *J. R. Beard*. (3) Here the murderer was safe till he could have a fair trial, before impartial judges, and with at least two witnesses.

IV. For Whom Prepared. — V. 3. **The slayer that killeth any person unawares**. In accordance with these regulations a wide distinction was made between the man who committed wilful murder and one who slew another by mistake, in ignorance, and unintentionally. (a) In the former case the guilty criminal met with no compassion from the Mosaic Code. He was regarded as accursed. The horns of the altar were to be no refuge for him. He was to be dragged from them by force to suffer his doom, nor could rank or wealth exempt him from it (Num. 35: 31, 32). (b) In the latter case,

9. ¹ These were the ' cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth *any* person 'at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, ² until he stood before the congregation.

¹ Num. 35: 15.² v. 6.

Rev. Ver.: s appointed cities.

t unwittingly.

where life had been taken unawares, a more merciful system of legislation intervened. In contradistinction to the customs of the Greeks and Romans and even of the Middle Ages, which made places of sanctuary available to *criminals of every kind*, the Jewish Lawgiver reserved them for unintentional acts of murder, and for these alone. The distinguishing marks of such acts are clearly laid down in Numbers 35: 25-34; Deuteronomy 19: 4-6. — *Cambridge Bible*.

The object of this distinction is to save the innocent, while making him pay the penalty of his carelessness, and yet in no way to lessen the feeling of the guilt of murder. There is no price that can pay for human life. It is most sacred, and nothing but at least as high penalty and cost on the part of the criminal can be just, or can stem the tide of murderous crime.

V. **How Managed.** — Vs. 4-6, 9.

FIRST. The one who had killed another must flee to a city of refuge. In no other place was he safe. If he refused to go, the blood was on his own head.

SECOND. The preliminary examination. 4. **Shall stand at the entering of the gate of the city, i. e.,** not outside of the gate of the city, but in the forum, or public place of judgment (compare Ruth 4: 1, 2). — *Cambridge Bible*. The gate was surmounted by an arch or by beams which upheld the massive wall above. The gateway was thus sheltered from sun and storm. It was a convenient place for the sessions of the judges, and was habitually used by them. Its publicity also tended to prevent abuses of their authority. The gateway of the city of refuge was probably always attended night and day by men whose duty it was to receive and take charge of fugitives. — *Johnson*. **Shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders, i. e.,** as soon as the manslayer presented himself at the city of refuge, the elders of the city were to hold an inquiry, and receive him provisionally into the city, if there should appear good *prima facie* cause for so doing. — *Cook*. This trial was like that before our police judges or our grand jury.

THIRD. If this examination was favorable he was received into the city, and the authorities assigned him a place, that he may dwell among them, till his accusers came, and he could have a formal trial.

FOURTH. The regular trial. 6. **Until he stand.** The judges and elders of the people, in trying civil and criminal causes, always sat; the person who came for judgment, or who was tried, always stood. — *Bush*. **Before the congregation.** The rulers and representatives of the city, who are frequently spoken of as if they were the body of the people (compare Josh. 24: 1 and 24: 2, 19, 21).

FIFTH. The trial was fair. A strong bar against the license of private revenge was placed by the provision which required the concurrence of at least two witnesses in any capital question (Num. 35: 19-30; Deut. 17: 6-12; 19: 12-17). Witnesses were restrained from falsehood by the just requirement that they should be punished, if guilty of perjury, by the same punishment which would have fallen, had their testimony proved acceptable, upon the person against whom they testified (Deut. 19: 16-21). Witnesses were further restrained from untruth in capital cases by the requirement that, if the prisoner were condemned to die, they should throw the first stones, thus bringing to them the horror of committing actual murder by false testimony (Deut. 13: 10; 17: 7; Josh. 7: 25; John 8: 7). This requirement was probably operative only in those cases where the avenger of blood did not become the executioner.

SIXTH. If the fugitive was found guilty of wilful murder, he was delivered up to the executioner. These cities were to be no hotbeds of crime.

SEVENTH. If he was exonerated from wilful murder, he was safe, but only so long as he remained within the city and its suburbs of one thousand cubits beyond the walls (Num. 35: 26-28). He must remain here, away from his home and business, till the death of the high priest. This seeming hardship was necessary and just, because there is usually some fault of passion or carelessness in even accidental murders, and this great inconvenience would tend to carefulness and safety. **Until the death of the high priest.** There ought to be some limit to this exile, and this change of administration would be certainly as good as any.

VI. Christ the True City of Refuge.

FIRST. THE AVENGER. Conscience, the law of God in the soul, is an avenger. "Where is there a power to be found comparable to that of an accusing conscience, which, with its condemning voice, fills even heroes with dismay, who otherwise would not have trembled before thousands?" — *Krummacher*. "Who is the avenger? Law. What law? Criminal law, sanitary law, social law, natural law. . . . Wherever want stares, and vice reigns, and rags rot, there the avenger takes his stand. Delay him not. He is the messenger of Christ. The very nature of things is God's avenger." — *Professor Drummond in The Programme of Christianity*.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.

— *Shakespeare, King Lear*.

Which way I fly is hell, Myself am hell.

— *Milton's Satan*.

Prof. G. Stanley Hall, President of Clark University, in a lecture just delivered on Science and Religion, said that science was emphasizing the scripture doctrine of sin; and that seventy-two per cent. of the cases of melancholia could be traced directly to sin. The avenger is a necessity for the cure of sin, — for leading men to repentance from a realizing sense of the awful nature of sin; and for urging them to go to the only possible refuge from both sin and its punishment. God's justice is like the Goel as understood by Dr. Trumbull, not seeking revenge, but equity.

SECOND. CHRIST IS THE CITY OF REFUGE. It is not the church, it is not the altar; it is Christ himself who is the one and only sacrifice for sin, and therefore the one and only hiding place to which the sinner can repair. In no place, person, or thing, — in no buildings, sacrifices, or rites, — is there any refuge for the guilty, save the atonement of the cross; but there such a refuge is provided as will meet the case of sinners of every class, not excepting the wilful murderer himself. — *T. Smith*. That city of refuge shall shelter you; and in the heart of Jesus, triumphant, blessed, secure, you shall sing the righteousness and the blood of Christ, who shelters sinners from the wrath to come. — *Spurgeon*.

Christ is the city of refuge because God has so appointed. To go to him involves repentance of sin, forsaking of sin, the choice of God and goodness as our portion, a new heart, and a new nature of love. It brings us within every heavenly power that can save from sin, every high motive, the presence of the Holy Spirit. Christ is not an arbitrary, but a necessary city of refuge from sin.

THIRD. Christ is made as easy of access as possible. He is everywhere present. The conditions of salvation are as simple and easy as it is possible to make them. Sabbaths, churches, meetings, invitations from Christians bring Christ as near as possible to every soul.

FOURTH. God has done all he can to aid and draw men to Jesus. Now, beloved, I think this is a picture of the road to Christ Jesus. (See above, in No. 2, under *facts about the cities of refuge*.) It is no roundabout road of the law; it is no obeying this, that, and the other; it is a straight road: "Believe and live." It is a road so hard that no self-righteous man can ever tread it; but it is a road so easy that every sinner who knows himself to be a sinner might by it find his way to Christ and heaven. And, lest they should be mistaken, God has sent me and my brethren in the ministry to be like hand posts in the way, to point poor sinners to Jesus; and we desire ever to have on our lips the cry, "Refuge, refuge, refuge." Sinner, that is the way; walk therein, and be thou saved. — *Spurgeon*.

FIFTH. And once in *this* city of refuge, the refugee must never leave it, but must make it his abiding home. For our High Priest never dies. He died unto sin once; but he now lives unto God forever. All, then, who repair to him must dwell in him continually; and, indeed, if they are right minded, they will have no desire to forsake him for a moment. — *T. Smith*.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Dr. Trumbull's *Blood Covenant*, pp. 258-263, and appendix on blood-ransoming, give an interesting account of the Goel, or blood avenger. So also does Bush's *Illustrations of Scripture*, pp. 99-102. Livingston and Stanley on several occasions made payments, or had them made, to avoid a conflict on a question of blood; see *Travels in South Africa*, pp. 390, 368-370, 482; *The Congo*, I., pp. 520-527. Spurgeon's *Sermons*, Series 3, "The Sinner's Refuge" is very effective. For illustrations of conscience, see Eschylus' *Tragedy of Orestes*; Scott's *Marmion*; Shakespeare's *Richard III.* and *Macbeth*; Hood's *Poems*, "Dream of Eugene Aram"; Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SUBJECT: THE SINNER'S REFUGE.

I. THE AVENGER.

Illustration. Every one knows Victor Hugo's beautiful poem, *La Conscience*, the story of Cain fleeing away before the eye of God. He walks thirty days and thirty nights, until he reaches the shores of the ocean. "Let us stop here," says he. But as he sits down his face turns pale; he has seen "in the mournful skies the eye at the same place." His sons, full of awe, try to erect barriers between him and the eye: a tent, then a wall of iron, then a tower and a city; but all is vain. "I see the eye still," cries the unhappy man. At last they dig a tomb; the father is put into it. But

Though overhead they closed the awful vault,
The Eye was in the tomb, and looked on Cain.

— *Reuben Sailens.*

Illustration. The avenger may be illustrated by the workings of conscience in Judas; in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*; and in Richard III., where the ghosts of those he had murdered successively rise up in judgment against him, crying, "Let me sit heavy on thy soul to-morrow"; in the old Greek stories of Prometheus with the gnawing vulture, and of the Furies, etc.

II. THE REFUGE.

Illustration. Herodotus says that when Aristodikus disturbed the birds' nests in the temple at Cumac, and took the young from them, a voice spoke out from the interior of the temple, "Most villainous of men! how darest thou do such a thing as to drive away such as seek refuge in my temple." And the Athenians were so enraged at Atarbes for killing a sparrow which had built a nest in the temple of Esculapius that they killed him. It is said that the Arabs never disturb the birds which build their nests in the temple at Mecca.

III. CHRIST OUR CITY OF REFUGE.

Illustration. Luther says, "Once upon a time the devil said to me, 'Martin Luther, you are a great sinner, and you will be damned!' — 'Stop, stop!' said I; 'one thing at a time. I am a great sinner, it is true, though you have no right to tell me of it. I confess it. What next?' — 'Therefore you will be damned.' — 'That is not good reasoning. It is true I am a great sinner; but it is written, 'Jesus Christ came to save sinners;' therefore I shall be saved! Now go your way.' So I cut the devil off with his own sword, and he went away mourning because he could not cast me down by calling me a sinner."

LESSON XII. — SEPTEMBER 22.

JOSHUA RENEWING THE COVENANT. — JOSHUA 24: 14-25.

Golden Text. — *The Lord our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.* — JOSH. 24: 24.

THE SECTION includes Joshua 21: 43 to 24: 33.

TIME. — B. C. 1426. Eighteen years after the last lesson, and the twenty-fifth of Joshua's rule over Israel.

JOSHUA was nearly 110 years old, living at Timnath Serah, not far from Shechem.

PLACE. — The religious capital was still at Shiloh, six miles northwest of Jerusalem; but the great assembly for renewing the covenant was at Shechem, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim.

PARALLELS. — The covenant on Mounts Ebal and Gerizim twenty-five years before (Josh. 8: 30-35; Deut. 27: 1-10); the covenant at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19: 1-25); the covenant in the plains of Moab (Deut. 29: 1, including Deut. chaps. 27-30); Elijah at Carmel (1 Kings 18: 19-39).

EXPLANATORY.

I. Eighteen Years of Rest. — Although the Canaanites were not wholly exterminated (23: 12; Judg. 2: 2, 3), yet after nearly seven years of warfare, of course inter-

mingled with the cultivating of fields and the making of homes, the war was practically ended, and the people gave themselves to the positive work of settling down as prosperous citizens of the Promised Land (21: 43-45). Two or three things should be noted in passing.

FIRST. THE RETURN of the soldiers of the two and a half tribes to their homes on the east of Jordan, after faithfully aiding their brethren conquer the West, as their brethren had aided them in possessing the East. "Yet it is very possible that in the intervals of action, and when the rest of the army had retired into winter quarters, some of them at least may have visited their families across the Jordan, or been relieved by other detachments. Like faithful soldiers, they await the full close of the war and an honorable discharge. Had they departed sooner, they would have been recalled as fugitives or branded as cowards; now they retire with blessings and applause."—*Bush*. They returned with great riches from the spoil of the nations, as the reward of their service. True brotherly kindness and helpfulness enrich this life, both in material blessings and in better things than any temporal riches. That individual, that family, that nation which treats all men as brothers, which extends a helping hand to every one in need, however poor or degraded, grows richer in possessions and in spiritual life. Every neglect to help, every repulse of others takes from our own lives.

On reaching home they were to divide their gains with those who remained at home. So David, four hundred years later, gave those who remained to guard the baggage an equal share with those who fought the battle. Those who deny themselves to support ministers and missionaries are entitled to partake of the reward of their labors and shall, with those "who turn many unto righteousness," "shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever." It is necessary that some should "abide by the stuff"; should carry on the business of the world, and do its work; and if they are devoted heart and soul to the Lord, and gather in order that they may sustain the soldiers of the cross in the field, both together shall sing the songs and wear the crowns of victory.

SECOND. THE ALTAR ED. There is no little instruction in the incident that occurred after the return, when the nation was separated into two parts by the river Jordan, whose peculiar formation makes it difficult to cross. The two and a half tribes built an altar of their own. When the western tribes heard of this, they assumed that the others were separating themselves from the nation and going into idolatry and rebellion. They were both indignant and afraid that the vials of the divine wrath would be poured out upon them even more severely than when Achan's sin involved the whole nation in disaster. A delegation was sent over the river, who charged their brethren with daring rebellion, with disgracing the nation, with bringing down divine judgments on all the people.

"One should have said that if anything was fitted to have a bad effect on the two and a half tribes, it was this mode of dealing. It is not wise to assume that your brother is a villain. And scolding, as has been well said, does not make men sorry for their sins."—*Blaikie*.

On the other hand, they showed that their rash zeal without knowledge was sincere and unselfish by offering to give up a part of their own possessions, and welcome the two and a half tribes to a home on their side of Jordan.

This kind proposal mollified the wrath that the indignant words tended to kindle. "A soft answer turned away wrath." The accused kindly explained their motives and purposes, denied the charges, and the whole difficulty was settled peacefully and satisfactorily. "But who can estimate all the misery that has come in almost every age, in circles both public and private, from hasty suspicions of evil, *Suspecting Evil*, which a little patience, a little inquiry, a little opportunity of explanation might have at once averted? History, tradition, fiction alike furnish us with instances. We recall the story of Llewellyn and his dog Gelert, stabbed by his master, who thought the stains upon his mouth were the blood of his beloved child. We remember the tragedy of Othello and Desdemona; we see how the fondest love may be poisoned by hasty suspicion, and the dearest of wives murdered, when a little patience would have shown her innocent."—*Professor Blaikie*.

THIRD. THE HORNETS. Joshua tells the people how God drove out two kings of the Amorites, "not with thy sword, nor with thy bow," but with hornets (24: 12).

"The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands twice told over."

He has many ways of accomplishing his ends. One was by these insects. As an illustration of what can be done by hornets, Sir Dighton Probyn, commanding a celebrated regiment during the Sepoy mutiny in India, sent out his troopers to scour the woods, to learn

14. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in ¹ sincerity and in truth: and ² put away the gods which your fathers served ³ on the other side of the flood, and in ³ Egypt; and serve ye the Lord.

¹ Gen. 17: 1; 20: 5. Psa. 119: 1.
² 2 Cor. 1: 12.

² Lev. 17: 7. Ezek. 20: 18.
³ Ezek. 20: 7, 8.

Rev. Ver.: *a* beyond the river.



Shechem.

to which they would be exposed. Therefore he determines to make, before he dies, one more appeal to them, under the most solemn circumstances possible. He therefore summoned all the tribes, with their judges and officers, in one great assembly at Shechem, probably on the sloping sides of Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, where they had gathered twenty-five years before, on their first entrance into the promised land, and made the most solemn promises to God.

No circumstances could be more impressive, as, amid these hallowed associations and memories, the white-haired, beloved leader, saintly in character, and touched with the light of a near eternity, arose and made his dying appeal, something as the Apostle John, when very old, went feebly about among the disciples, saying continually, Little children, love one another. In this place all the assembled multitudes can see and hear him. For the air is so clear that a "single voice can be heard by many thousands."

III. The Great Choice Set Before the People. — Vs. 14, 15. In his address Joshua first recounts, as in a panorama, with scene after scene, some of the great things God had done for this people in the past. No idol had ever done such things for its adherents. On the contrary, Jehovah's victories for them were victories over false gods. In view of these things there was but one thing to do.

14. Now therefore, in view of these facts. **Fear the Lord.** Not be in terror before him, nor driven from him by fright, but hold him in reverential awe and respect, realize his power to help and to punish, so as to devote yourselves to him in perfect trust. There can be no trifling. **Serve him in sincerity and in truth.** Not in outward forms merely, but also in the heart and the life (John 4: 23, 24), and not with a secret regard for images, but giving him a worship spiritual and real. *Sincerity* is derived from *sine cera*, without wax, *i. e.*, pure, clear honey. Sincerity is therefore freedom from all wrong motives or feelings, from hypocrisy or pretence. **Put away the gods which your fathers served.** We thus learn that idolatry lurked among the Israelites, and that it was that form of idolatry which had been known in the family of Terah of old (v. 2). **On the other side of the flood, i. e.**, of the river Euphrates, whence Abraham came. **And serve ye the Lord.** The real object of Joshua was to renew and confirm the covenant which had already been made with God.

"We must fairly consider how hard it was for the thought of the one, almighty, omnipresent God to find lodgment in the mind of the heathen-spirited people; how, with this faith, they stood alone among the nations of the whole contemporary world."
— *Lange*.

15. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, ¹ choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether ² the gods which your fathers served that *were* ^b on the other side of the flood, or ³ the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: ⁴ but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord.

16. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods;

17. For the Lord our God, he *it is* that brought ^c us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and ^d which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the ^e people through whom we passed:

¹ Ruth 1: 15. ¹ Kings 18: 21.
² Ezek. 20: 39. John 6: 67.

³ Ex. 23: 24, 32, 33; 34: 15.
Deut. 13: 7. Judg. 6: 10.

Rev. Ver.: ^b beyond the river. ^d that.
^c us and our fathers up.
^e peoples through the midst of whom.

15. If it seem evil, unwise, injurious to your interests or to your conscience. **Choose you this day whom ye will serve.** Be decided. Cease to "halt between two opinions," to be "everything by turns, and nothing long." They had been harboring idols (v. 23), and worshipping them in secret, while openly professing to serve God. It was high time for this to cease, for it was practically deciding for idols. The whole hope and prosperity of the nation depended upon a whole-hearted service of Jehovah. So still the gospel demands that we decide at once (2 Cor. 6: 2). There is no good reason for deferring the matter a single moment. — *Johnson*. Whatever motives would lead them to serve God at all would lead them to do it immediately. To defer a duty is to refuse it. **The gods which your fathers served** in Chaldea. What had these done for them? Their ancestors had rejected these gods as unworthy. **The gods of the Amorites**, who had been unable to protect their worshippers from being destroyed by the Israelites. It would be absurd to turn from Jehovah to them. **As for me and my house, household, we will serve the Lord**, even if we stand alone. The decision was worthy of the grand old man. All the influence of his example, enforced by his experience, his success, his character, his good judgment, was thrown upon the side of right. "The service of God is nothing below the most distinguished of men. It is no diminution of their greatness, no disparagement of their rank, reputation, or honor, to be decidedly pious, and to be openly and avowedly so. On the contrary, it heightens every other distinction, and makes all honor still more honorable. Those that lead and rule in other things should be first in the service of God, and go before in every good work." — *Bush*.

IV. The Choice Made. — V. 16. And the people answered, etc. The people decided, and sincerely, to serve God. It was made under an appeal, under the power of the strongest and best motives that could be brought to bear upon them, when their minds were uplifted into clearest vision, above the smoke and clouds of earth. That was the right time to make a decision. God has given us feelings on purpose to move us to right decisions. Joshua did everything possible to confirm their decision and to render it enduring. He made them repeat it three times (vs. 16, 21, 24), each time in stronger terms, and in clearer light. Nor was it in vain. It was no decision vanishing like "the morning cloud and early dew," but it lasted for a whole generation, as long as the people lived who made this choice (24: 31; Judg. 2: 7).

V. Reasons for the Decision. — Vs. 17-21. The great choice was made for the very best of reasons. It was an intellectual as well as moral and emotional choice. Their whole nature made the choice. Their whole being enforced their decision.

REASONS AGAINST. It is always well to weigh the reasons against any course. What reasons could the Israelites have for worshipping idols? (1) It gave them a visible object of worship, wholly unworthy, indeed, but real to the sense. It was a substitute for faith in the unseen. (2) It was the fashion of the surrounding nations, indeed, of the richest and most powerful nations of the world. (3) It sought to satisfy the conscience and the religious nature, while imposing no restraints on the natural desires and passions. Not one of these reasons is worthy of the high nature of man.

REASONS FOR. **FIRST** (v. 17). Jehovah was their God. He had a right to their service and love. He was their Creator and Preserver.

SECOND REASON. *Gratitude.* He it is that brought us up, etc. Their whole past history was wrought by God. Everything they possessed was the gift of God. He had

18. And the Lord drove out from before us all the ¹people, even the Amorites which dwell in the land: *therefore* ²will we also serve the Lord; for he *is* our God.

19. And Joshua said unto the people, ¹Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he *is* ²a ³holy God; he *is* ³a ⁴jealous God; ⁴he will not forgive your ¹transgressions nor your sins.

20. ⁶If ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, ⁶then he will turn and do you ¹hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good.

21. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

22. And Joshua said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses against yourselves that ⁷ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, *We are* witnesses.

¹ Matt. 6: 24.

² Lev. 19: 2. ¹ Sam. 6: 20.

³ Psa. 99: 5, 9. Isa. 5: 16.

⁴ Ex. 20: 5. ⁴ Ex. 23: 21.

⁵ 1 Chron. 28: 9. Ezra 8: 22.

Isa. 1: 28.

⁶ Josh. 23: 15.

Acts 7: 42.

⁷ Psa. 119: 173.

Rev. Ver.: *f* peoples.

f we also will.

f an.

f evil.

led them; he had helped them in marvellous ways; he had chosen them as his own peculiar people.

18. **The Amorites** (mountaineers). A Syrian tribe, descended from Canaan, dwelling in the mountainous regions of Canaan. These are mentioned in particular because they were of gigantic stature, of great courage, and the most formidable enemies the Israelites had to conquer. It was these people that took away the faith of their fathers and made them wander forty years in the wilderness. But even these were conquered by the aid of God.

THIRD REASON. By these great deeds Jehovah had proved himself to be the true God. No other claimants could stand before him. This truth was written upon their history in letters so large and clear that it could be read even from the stars.

FOURTH REASON. *Joshua's own example* was a powerful reason in favor of their choosing the true God. He was the most prominent man in the nation. *Eschines* in his famous oration against Demosthenes says, "Most of all, fellow-citizens, if your sons ask whose example they shall imitate, what will you say? For you know well it is not music, nor the gymnasium, nor the schools that mould young men; it is much more the public proclamations, the public example. . . . The character of a city is determined by the men it crowns." *Eschines on Example.*

FIFTH REASON. *The character of God.* 19. **Ye cannot serve the Lord, etc.; i.e.,** ye cannot in your own strength; it is more difficult than you imagine. — *J. F. and B.* It cannot be supposed for a moment that Joshua intended to deter the people from the service of God by representing it as impracticable or dangerous. On the contrary, his design is to enlist them more sincerely and steadfastly in it. — *Bush.* It was a very serious and difficult thing to serve God, and unless they were true hearted and sincere, they would not succeed. **For he is a holy God**, and therefore cannot endure anything impure, or selfish, or wicked in his children. **He is a jealous God**, unwilling to have a rival, as a true husband or wife is and ought to be unwilling to have a rival in the other's affections. Such a rival is intrinsically opposed to the very nature of the relation. **He will not forgive your transgressions:** rather, will not pass by, as if taking no notice. Joshua is supposing their wilful rebellion and forsaking of God. — *Gray.* He will not tolerate your transgressions. He will punish them, and take every means to save you from them. It will not be possible, under God's rule, to prosper while continuing in sin.

20. **If ye forsake . . . he will turn.** He will assume a different attitude toward you because you put yourself in a different relation to him. The same unchanging beneficent sun is one thing to a live tree, and another to a dead one. It is cheering or consuming, according to our relations to it; brings malaria from the marshes, or gives color and flavor to fruits, according to what it shines upon. "Man's repentance is a change of will; God's repentance is the willing a change." **And do you hurt**, because you deserve it, and it is necessary for your own good and the good of the world. He cannot reward disobedience with blessings.

21. Again the people declare that they will serve the Lord.

VI. The Witnesses to the Transaction. — Vs. 22-25. There were three witnesses. **FIRST WITNESS.** 22. **Ye are witnesses against yourselves:** your public promise to obey will be a witness that you know your duty and accepted the conditions of blessings

23. Now therefore ¹ put away, *said he*, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD ² God of Israel.

24. And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and ¹ his voice will we obey.

25. So Joshua ² made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

¹ Gen. 35: 2. Judg. 10: 16. 1 Sam. 7: 3. Rev. Ver.: & the God. / unto his voice will we hearken.
² Ex. 15: 25. 2 Kings 11: 17.

for obedience and punishment for disobedience. This witness will warn you if you are tempted to go astray, and will justify God's dealings with you, if, forsaking God, you suffer the bitter punishment.

WITNESSING AGAINST OURSELVES. It is still true of men that they are witnesses against themselves as to their duty toward God now; and they will be all the witnesses needed in the day of judgment. (1) Every sinner's conscience is a witness against his course. (2) The principles on which business men must act as condition of worldly success will witness against those who refuse to apply like principles to religion, — principles, which, if lived out, would lead them to be Christians. (3) The fault-findings of men against good people show that these fault-finders know what is right, and are to blame if they do not live up to it. (4) The principles on which good government in this world is based will justify God's moral dealings with men. (5) The obedience which parents require of their children, the gratitude acknowledged to be due for favors received, the honor demanded for those to whom honor belongs will all witness to the justice of God's demand for our obedient and loving service. (6) Our professions of religion are an abiding witness against us, if we forsake God.

23. And incline your heart unto the Lord God: for if they gave God their hearts, they could not worship idols; and all acts of worship, even to the Lord, were in vain, unless they proceeded from a heart of love. The supreme love of God was the fountain from which all morality and all their prosperity and success would flow.

V. 24. Again, in still stronger words, they promise, **His voice will we obey.**

SECOND WITNESS. *The written word.* 25. So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day: *i. e.*, he solemnly ratified and renewed the covenant of Sinai (Ex. 19:20), as Moses had done before him in the plains of Moab (Deut. 29: 1). — *Cook.* **Set them a statute:** either he formed the whole into a statute and ordinance which was promulgated for all Israel to receive and obey, or it may mean that he declared or propounded to them, he set before them, the sum and substance of the Mosaic statutes, which their covenant obliged them to observe. — *Bush.* Joshua wrote all these words in the book of the law of the Lord (v. 26).

THIRD WITNESS. *A stone monument* was set up as a perpetual reminder of their promise on this great day.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

The *commentaries and works on Joshua*, referred to under previous lessons. *Sermons* on verse 15, the central point of the lesson, by Bellamy, J. Howe, T. C. Hare, Nevins, Tillotson, W. J. Armstrong. *Sermons* on verse 22, by S. Davies and T. J. Frelinghuysen. An effective illustration of parting advice is found in Mrs. Sewall's *Ballads*, "Mother's Last Words." Some very strong words on the example of public men are found in Wendell Phillips' *Speeches*, "Idols"; and in Webster's Speech on "Bunker Hill Monument," concerning the training value of monuments.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. There are great advantages in large public meetings where every possible appeal can be made to persuade men to decide to serve God.

2. It is right, and wise, and safe to bring every good motive to bear upon those who are making the choice; to appeal to the reason, to the feelings, to conscience, to the sense of honor, to gratitude.

3. Impressions should be repeated, decisions should be expressed over and over again. A public confession is a great power for causing impressions to endure.

4. Every person must decide for himself whether he will serve God or not. We must serve God from free choice, or not at all.

5. The service of God is reasonable. Every high motive is on that side.

6. We should throw the weight of our personal influence and example on the side of God.

7. The service of God is worthy of the most distinguished men. Those that lead in other things should lead in God's service.

8. We should make our decision now,—"to-day, if ye will hear his voice." For (1) you are not too young. (2) You should not wait for your feelings to change. (3) You should not wait till you are better, but come that you may be better. (4) You should not wait for others. (5) You should not wait for opposition to cease.—*Johnson*.

9. We are witnesses against ourselves. The mercies each one has received, his conscience, his profession, his principles as to worldly things, his dealings with others, all are witnesses against him, if he refuses to serve God.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

For introductory take up the suggestive incidents in the intervening history.

SUBJECT: THE DECISION FOR GOD.

I. THE GREAT MEETING. The value of such meetings.

II. THE CHOICE PRESENTED (vs. 14, 15).

COMPARE Elijah on Mount Carmel.

Illustration. When Cyrus the Great desired to enlist the Persian warriors to join in his plans, he assembled the army on a certain day and place, and provided each with an axe. He marched them into the forest, and made them toil all day in cutting down trees, with coarse food and little rest. The next day he brought them to a great banquet, with abundant meat and rich wines in profusion, and bid them feast and be merry. They enjoyed it all the more after the hard fare of the previous day, and joined in merry songs, and tales, and dances. At evening Cyrus called them together, and asked which service they liked best. Then he said to them, "If you follow me, you will enjoy ease, abundance, and luxury. If you refuse, you must toil on in privations and hardships as you do now, and so end your days."—Condensed from Abbott's *Cyrus the Great*. So must we choose the service of God or the service of sin.

Cyrus's Two Feasts.

Illustration. Pizarro, in his earlier attempts to conquer Peru, came to a time when all his followers were about to desert him. "Drawing his sword, he traced a line with it from east to west. Then, turning towards the south, 'Friends and comrades,' he said, 'on that side are toil, hunger, nakedness, the drenching storm, desertion, and death; on this side, ease and pleasure. There lies Peru with all its riches; here, Panama and its poverty. Choose, each man, as becomes a brave Castilian. For my part I go to the south.' So saying, he stepped across the line. One after another, his followers followed him. This was the crisis of Pizarro's fate. There are moments in the lives of men which, as they are seized or neglected, decide their future destiny."—*Prescott's Conquest of Peru, I., 263-265*.

Illustration. The Tract "Which Side of the Line."

III. THE DECISION (vs. 16, 21, 24). This was thrice repeated.

IV. THE REASONS WEIGHED (vs. 17-21).

Illustration. "The Philosopher's Scales," a poem by Jane Taylor.

Illustration of verses 19 and 20. Mr. William F. Clarke, of Canada, claims to have discovered, from repeated observations, that the most important function of the bee's sting is not stinging. In a recent article he says: "My observations and reflections have convinced me that the most important office of the bee sting is that which is performed in doing the artistic cell work, capping the comb, and infusing the formic acid by means of which honey receives its keeping qualities. As I said at Detroit, the sting is really a skilfully contrived little trowel, with which the bee finishes off and caps the cells when they are filled brimful of honey. This explains why honey extracted before it is capped over does not keep well. The formic acid has not been injected into it. Herein we see that the sting and the poison bag, with which so many of us would like to dispense, are essential to the storage of our coveted product, and that without them the beautiful comb honey of commerce would be a thing unknown."

The Bee's Sting.

— *Scientific American*. Thus it is with God's justice. It is for salvation, it is to preserve life, and only because men will not obey that it pains them, and then, in order to make them obey.

V. THE COVENANT (vs. 22-25).

Illustration. Webster's words on Bunker Hill. "That motionless shaft will be the most powerful of speakers. Its speech will be of civil and religious liberty. It will speak of patriotism and courage. It will speak of the moral improvement and elevation of mankind. Decrepit age will lean against its base, and ingenious youth gather around it, speak to each other of the glorious events with which it is connected, and exclaim, 'Thank God, I also am an American.'"

LESSON XIII. — SEPTEMBER 29.

REVIEW.

Golden Text.—*There hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant.*—I KINGS 8: 56.

BOOKS.—Our lessons for this Quarter have been taken from five books of the Bible, —Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. And we need to study the course of history through them all.

TIME.—The time covered by these lessons is about sixty-four years, B. C. 1490 to 1426.

PERIODS.—These sixty-four years are divided into three distinct periods:—

1. The wanderings in the wilderness, thirty-nine years, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

2. The conquest of Canaan, seven years, Joshua.

3. The years of rest and occupation, eighteen years, Joshua.

PLACE.—The history was wrought out in various places in the wilderness of the Arabian peninsula, in the country east of the Jordan, and in the Promised Land.

SUBJECT: AN ANCIENT PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

I. THE ITINERARY from EGYPT to full possession of the 'PROMISED LAND. Trace out the chief stations of this journey on the map, and note the events connected with them.

1. Egypt.—Slavery and oppression.

2. Red Sea.—A great deliverance.

3. Sinai.—The giving of the Law and the organization of the nation. The golden calf. The tabernacle.

4. Kadesh Barnea.—The central station for thirty-eight years. Report of the spies.

5. The Wilderness.—Wanderings for thirty-nine years.

6. Mount Hor.—Death of Aaron.

7. The Arabah.—The fiery serpents.

8. East of Jordan.—Conquest of the nations. Sihon, Og, Balaam.

9. Plains of Moab.—Review by Moses. Deuteronomy.

10. Mount Pisgah.—Death of Moses.

11. Jordan.—Miraculous crossing.

12. Jericho.—Fall of its walls. First conquest.

13. Ai.—Defeat. Achan. Victory.

14. Shechem.—The covenant renewed.

15. Beth-horon.—Sun and moon stand still.

16. Shiloh.—The religious capital.

17. The Whole Country.—The division of the land.

18. Shechem.—Joshua's farewell address.

II. THE EVENTS marking the training and progress of the nation in their pilgrimage, from an UNTRAINED MULTITUDE to an organized, developed, and successful NATION.

1. *Slavery in Egypt.* Expressing and symbolizing the general moral state of the people. Sin is a slavery, oppressive and bitter.

2. *The Exodus* was the new birth of the nation, the beginning of a new life. It is the symbol of conversion, a new spiritual life.

4. *The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire.* The divine guidance, through Providence, and the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God. God's signs were seen, God's word was heard.

16. *The Death of Moses*. "There is a beautiful legend that at the funeral of Saint Ranieri, June, 1161, at the moment when, as is usual in the course of the service for the dead, the '*Gloria in excelsis*' was suppressed, as unbecoming in its cheerful character the sadness of the occasion, a choir of angels appeared in the midst of the silent congregation and chanted the words so mistakenly omitted, a spontaneous accompaniment bursting forth from the organ." — *London Sunday-School Chronicle*.

17. *The New Leader*. Note the motto under the medallion of the Wesleys, "God buries his workmen, but carries on the work."

18. *Reports from the promised land*, and visions of its blessedness, the higher experiences of the Christian, and the promises and descriptions of heaven.

19. *Crossing the Jordan*. God's marvellous works for his people. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

20. *The Fall of Jericho*. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

21. *The Defeat at Ai*. "What is defeat? Nothing but an education." — *Wendell Phillips*.

22. *The Conquest*. The land was not given them, except through struggle. In no other way could they really possess it. Every promised land in life is gained in the same way. "The prime elements of life, the fundamentals, the indispensables, can be gained only by drudgery,—for instance, power of attention, power of industry, promptitude in doing work, perseverance, courage before difficulties, cheer under straining burdens, self-control, self-denial, and temperance." "My daily task, whatever it be, that is what mainly educates me." "Drudgery is our chief schoolmaster; besides that, drudgery is the gray angel of success." "Let us sing a hallelujah, and make a fresh beatitude,—*blessed be drudgery*," — *W. C. Gannett*.

See "Blessed be Drudgery," and "Wrestling and Blessing," in a little book entitled, *The Faith That Makes Faithful* (Kerr & Co., Chicago).

23. *The Covenant Renewed*.

APPLICATIONS.

These incidents and the principles they illustrate can be applied:—

1. To the development of individual character, from the untrained beginning of life to a peaceful old age and a triumphant heaven.

2. To the evolution of the nation.

THE PORTRAIT GALLERY.

The review of this quarter can be made by means of a gallery of portraits. A frame can be made on the blackboard, and an outline of a face, and the descriptions written in as given by the school.

THE PICTURE GALLERY.

The review may also be conducted by means of a series of pictures of the leading events.

Not a few photographs can be obtained of great pictures by old masters, to show a class. Or stereopticon pictures can be obtained and a most interesting and profitable evening be given to the review by means of these pictures.

UNMOUNTED PHOTOGRAPHS can be obtained of the following pictures illustrating these lessons:—

The Head of Moses. — *Michael Angelo*.

The Head of Moses. — *Botticelli*.

The Ark of the Covenant. — *Memling*.

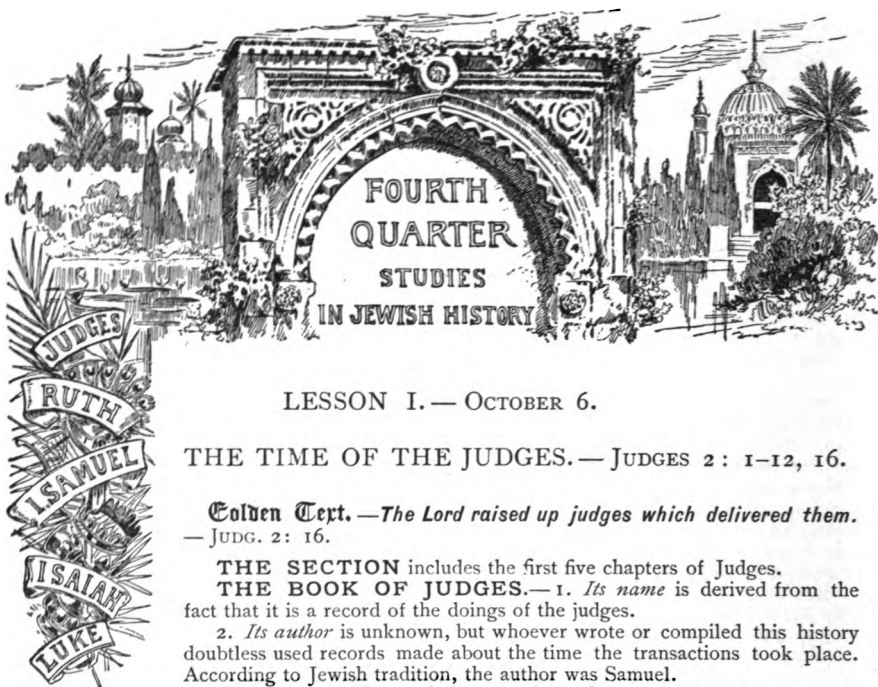
Elevation of Brazen Serpent. — *Michael Angelo, in Sistine Chapel*.

The Brazen Serpent. — *Van Weire*.

The Punishment of Korah. — *Botticelli*.

Moses Smiting the Rock. — *Murillo, at Seville*.

STEREOPTICON PICTURES. The Law from Mount Sinai; Moses Descending from Sinai; Punishment of Korah; Moses Smiting the Rock; The Fiery Serpents; Balaam; Crossing the Jordan; The Fall of Jericho; Stoning of Achan; Destruction of Ai; Joshua Commanding the Sun and Moon to Stand Still; The Angel Appearing to Joshua (all from Doré); Moses Receiving the Tables of the Law; Moses Delivering Them to the People; The Golden Calf; Fall of Jericho; The Ten Commandments; Chair from Tomb of Rameses; Mummy Cases.



LESSON I. — OCTOBER 6.

THE TIME OF THE JUDGES. — JUDGES 2 : 1-12, 16.

Golden Text. — *The Lord raised up judges which delivered them.*
— JUDG. 2 : 16.

THE SECTION includes the first five chapters of Judges.

THE BOOK OF JUDGES. — 1. *Its name* is derived from the fact that it is a record of the doings of the judges.

2. *Its author* is unknown, but whoever wrote or compiled this history doubtless used records made about the time the transactions took place. According to Jewish tradition, the author was Samuel.

3. *Its time.* The period covered by the book of Judges extends over about 280 years, from Joshua's death, B.C. 1427, to the birth of Samuel, B.C. 1146.

4. *Its structure.* The book is not a continuous history, but rather groups of incidents designed to illustrate the progress of God's people and God's dealings with them.

5. *Its scene.* The judges formed temporary heads in particular centers, or over particular groups of tribes, — Barak, in the north of Israel, Gideon in the center, Jephthah, on the east of Jordan, Samson, in the extreme southwest. Nevertheless, the judges are represented as exercising jurisdiction over Israel as a whole. — *Driver.*

TIME. — The date of the meeting at Bochim (vs. 1-5) is unknown. Joshua died about B.C. 1426. The remainder of the lesson is a general view of the period of the judges.

PLACE. — Bochim, probably near Shiloh, where the tabernacle was set up (Josh. 18 : 1), and which was the religious capital. Joshua died at Timnath-serah, a few miles south of Shechem.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Bā'ālīm; Bō'chīm (Bō'kīm); E'hūd; E'lōn; Gā'āsh; Gil'gāl; Ib'zān; Jā'bin; Jā'ir; Oth'niēl; Tim'nāth-he'rēs, or-se'rah; Tō'lā.

1. And *an Angel of the LORD came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and ^bsaid, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I swore unto your fathers; and ¹I said, I will never break my covenant with you.

¹ Gen. 17 : 7.

Rev. Ver. : α the. δ he said.

EXPLANATORY.

I. **The Partial Conquest and its Consequences.** — Vs. 1-5. Probably not long after the Israelites had settled down in their various allotments, it became plain that the people were not fulfilling their part of the covenant, and were in great danger of being corrupted by the Canaanites remaining in the land. Once more God gave them a solemn warning.

1. **An Angel of the Lord** was some special visible manifestation of God. "The phrase used nearly sixty times to designate the angel of God's presence. (See Gen. 16 : 7,

2. And ¹ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ²ye shall ^cthrow down their altars: ³but ye have not ^dobeyed my voice; why have ye done this?

3. Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be ⁴as *thorns* in your sides, and ⁵their gods shall be a ⁶snare unto you.

¹ Deut. 7: 2.⁴ Josh. 23: 13.Rev. Ver.: *c* break down.² Deut. 12: 3.⁵ Judg. 3: 6.*d* hearkened unto.³ V. 20. Psal. 106: 34.⁶ Ex. 23: 33; 34: 12. Deut. 7: 16. Psal. 106: 36.

9, 11; 22: 11-15; Num. 22: 22, 23, etc.) In all cases where 'the angel of the Lord' delivers a message, he does it, as here, as if God himself were speaking."—*Cook*. From Gilgal, the first encampment near Jericho, to Bochim, probably near Shiloh, where the tabernacle was. Perhaps it means that the last message from God was at Gilgal, and now his next one was at Bochim. And said. There was a general assembly of the Israelites in this place, to whom he spoke (v. 5). Perhaps the reason was some complaint from the people that they were annoyed and troubled by the old inhabitants still left in strongholds. I made you, etc. This was to make plain to the people who it was that was speaking. It gave the authority back of the message. I will never break my covenant with you. (See Gen. 17: 7; Ex. 3: 6-8.) Whatever they had done, God had been true to his own promises. His part of the covenant had been strictly kept, as all their past history proved. If they were not securely settled in Canaan, it was their own fault, not God's.

2. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants (Deut. 7: 2, 5; 12: 3). This was a part of the covenant on the part of the people. Their duty was to wholly drive them out, and to throw down their altars, root out the old religion, so that they would not be tempted to worship other gods. Ye have not obeyed my voice, though that was the condition on which alone they could prosper (Josh. 23: 11-13). *The People Break Their Covenant.*

3. Wherefore I also said, rather "I have now said," I protest, I declare. I will not drive them out from before you. I will no more work wonders as in the past, and give you the necessary aid. "The Garden of Eden was not the only paradise that sin ruined. Here was something like a new paradise for the children of Israel; and yet there was a possibility—more than a possibility—of its being ruined by sin."—*Blaikie*. As thorns, annoyances, trials, vexations. A snare, tempting to sin and leading to the punishment of their sin. The temptation was the result of their sin, and became the door to its bitter fruits.

NOTE 1. That their duty was to drive the Canaanites wholly out of the land and to take full possession at the beginning. It was best that they should not be annihilated at once before the Israelites could take possession (Deut. 7: 22), lest the wild beasts increase too fast in the wild lands; but the Israelites should have continued the warfare till the land was possessed only by God's own people (Deut. 7: 23). *Canaanites in the Land.*

NOTE 2. This was the easiest time to accomplish this work. The Canaanites were scattered, discouraged, broken in strength, and with God's aid could have been easily overcome.

NOTE 3. Since the Israelites had not done this, the next best thing for them was a course of discipline by means of their sins. When they refused the divine teacher and his lessons of victory, courage, heroism, fidelity, then they must go to school to a different and severer teacher, and from annoyances, temptations, dangers, and evil men gain discipline and learn the lessons of obedience and righteousness. On account of their neglect, they were led into idolatry and other sins, and were troubled for a thousand years. A thorough conquest at first would have saved them ages of suffering and sinning. *Hard Lessons.*

CANAANITES IN OUR PROMISED LAND. It is the same with the Canaanites in our own hearts. The victory over sin cannot be gained in a day, by one great battle. It is a war, not a battle. But God's people should make a constant warfare, and be constant victors. Every sin left in the heart, every faculty or power not wholly consecrated to Christ, every lust unsubdued will be a trouble and a sorrow all our days. The only true way, the only easy way to live a Christian life is to drive out every sin from the soul, and let only the holy and heavenly remain. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

4. And it came to pass, when the Angel of the LORD spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice and wept.

5. And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto the LORD.

6. ^a And when ¹ Joshua had ² let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7. ³ And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he ⁴ did for Israel.

8. And ⁵ Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *being* a hundred and ten years old.

9. ⁶ And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in ⁷ Timnath-heres, in the ⁸ mount of Ephraim, on the north ¹ side of the hill Gaash.

¹ Josh. 22: 6; 24: 28.

⁴ Josh. 24: 30.

Rev. Ver.: ^e Now when.

^h hill country.

² Josh. 24: 31.

⁵ Josh. 19: 50; 24: 30.

^f sent the people away.

ⁱ omit side.

³ Josh. 24: 29.

^g had wrought.

4. The people lifted up their voice and wept, in view of the consequences of their sin. They seem to have had more sorrow for the consequences than for their sin. Hence the evils were not withdrawn by God.

5. Called the name of that place Bochim, that is, "The Weepers." And they sacrificed. They held religious services. Doubtless they were sincere, both in their sorrow and in their worship. But the effect was rather *Superficial Repentance* on the surface than in the heart. The winds of emotion played upon the sea, but the deep moving tides were unchanged in their flow.

II. The Death of Joshua. — Vs. 6-9. Here begins a new section of the book of Judges. The story returns to the last chapter of the book of Joshua, verse 28.

6. Let the people, from their assembly at Shechem, after their solemn promise to obey God.

7. Served the Lord all the days of Joshua. So deep was the impress of this great and good man upon the nation. All the days of the elders. These elders would be all that were old enough to take part in the war of Canaan, according to Judges 3: 1, 2; and therefore, reckoning from the age of twenty to *Power of a Great Man* seventy, we cannot be far wrong in assigning a period of about fifty years from the entrance into Canaan to the death of the elders, or twenty or twenty-five years after the death of Joshua. — Cook. Seen all the great works of the Lord. This reveals another powerful source of impression upon the character of men, — the experience of God's wonderful works for the good of men. These two are among the mightiest moral forces for the progress of man. *Power of God's Works*.

8. The servant of the Lord. What a beautiful and noble epitaph for any man. A hundred and ten years old. As he was eighty-five, according to Josephus, when he entered the promised land, he had lived there twenty-five years.

9. Buried him . . . in Timnath-heres (portion of the sun), called also, by transposing the letters, Timnath-serah (portion of abundance). The situation is uncertain. Conder thinks it was at Kefr Hâris, nine miles south of Shechem.

THE CHARACTER OF JOSHUA. *His character was almost faultless.* (1) He was a man of profound faith. (2) He was courageous, fearing no danger, shrinking from no duty. (3) He was disinterested. Joshua lived, not for himself, but for his people. Unlike Alexander and other conquerors of the East, he sought no glory, was ambitious of no greatness, and aimed at no sinister purposes or ends. — T. Smith. (4) He was faithful to every trust reposed in him. (5) He had a rare combination of the highest qualities of the statesman and warrior. (6) Joshua was, in one respect, at least, an eminent type of the Lord Jesus Christ. As he conducted the chosen Israel into the rest of the earthly Canaan, so is Jesus, the true Joshua, leading the Christian Israel into the rest of Christian holiness and of heaven. — Smith.

JOSHUA'S WORK FOR HIS PEOPLE was (1) his own noble, brave, unselfish character. (2) He was a soldier who led them to victory. (3) He gave them rest; that is, a home in Canaan, that would be as restful as the people were willing to make it. (4) He led them not only to victory, but to God, to faith, to obedience.

III. The Period of the Judges. — Vs. 10-12, 16. In these verses is given a general view of the history of the Israelites while they were under the dispensation of the judges, who were deliverers, military leaders, far more than civil rulers.

The government was largely that of a republic, of which God himself was the real head. And this would have been the best possible, had the people been good enough to use it aright. "Every one did what was right in his own eyes." There was no central authority. It was intended to be "the people's government, made for the people, made by the people, and answerable to the people." — *Daniel Webster*. The high priest was God's prime minister; the priests and Levites were to decide ordinary cases and to instruct the nation; and judges were raised up to be military commanders in times of special need.

It is impossible to give an exact chronology of this period, because the story of the judges is not written in the chronological method. But we have some general outlines. There were 480 years between the Exodus (1491) and the building of the temple (1012), (1 Kings 6: 1). There were three hundred years (about) between Othniel, the first judge (1427), and Jephthah (1116) (Judges 11: 26).

Government.

Chronology.

JUDGES.	EVENTS.	YEARS.		DATE B. C.	PLACE.
	Exodus. Pharaoh overthrown.			1491	Egypt.
MOSES.	Wanderings in the Wilderness.	40		1451	Arabia.
	The Conquest.	7		1443	
JOSHUA.	Rest.	10			Palestine.
	The oppression of Chushan-Rishathaim, from Mesopotamia, during the last years of Joshua.	8		1427	
	<i>First Judge, Othniel</i> , son-in-law of Caleb. Rest.	40		1387	Othniel lived near Hebron.
	Oppression by the Moabites.	18			
	<i>Second Judge, Ehud</i> . Rest.	80			Ehud in the region of Jericho.
	<i>Third Judge, Shamgar</i> , who in these years by irregular acts, like those of Samson, saved the people from the Philistines.			1289	Shamgar in the south-west.
	Oppression by Jabin, King of Canaan, with 900 chariots of iron.	20			
	<i>Fourth Judge, Barak</i> , with Deborah. Rest.	40		1229	Kadesh of Naphtali in the north; west of Lake Merom.
	Oppression by Midianites.	7			
	<i>Fifth Judge, Gideon</i> . Ruth. Rest.	40		1182	Moreh in the plain of Jezreel, southern part of Galilee.
	<i>Sixth Judge, Abimelech</i> .	3			Shechem.
	<i>Seventh Judge, Tola</i> . Rest.	23		1156	Mount Ephraim.
	<i>Eighth Judge, Jair</i> . Rest.	22		1134	Gilead, east of Jordan.
	EAST ISRAEL. Oppression of Amorites.	18			WEST ISRAEL. <i>Twelfth Judge, Eli</i> . Shiloh.
	<i>Ninth Judge, Jephthah</i> . Gilead. Rest.	6			So. WEST ISRAEL. <i>Thirteenth Judge, Samson</i> .
	<i>Tenth Judge, Ibsan</i> . Bethlehem. Rest.	7			<i>Fourteenth Judge, Samuel</i> .
	<i>Eleventh Judge, Elon</i> . Zebulun. Rest.	10		1094	Partial Rest.

10. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which ¹ knew not the LORD, nor yet the ² works which he had ³ done for Israel.

11. And the children of Israel ¹ did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served ² Baalim:

¹ Ex. 5: 2. ¹ Sam. 2: 12. ¹ Chron. 28: 9.
Jer. 22: 16. Titus 1: 16.

Rev. Ver.: ¹ work.

² did that which was evil.

³ wrought.

³ the Baalim.



Baal-Hammon.
(Perrot and Chipiez.)

NOTE from the foregoing table that, contrary to the general impression, the times of peace and prosperity were much longer than the times of war and oppression. The black lines denote wars, the white spaces denote peace, those shaded denote oppressions. The intervals of peace naturally take up less space in the history than do the severer epochs of war and oppression, which mark sudden steps in the discipline of the people.

"The times of quiet and unbroken peace,
Though for a nation times of blessedness,
Give back faint echoes from the historian's page."

A simple crime or accident will occupy more space in the newspapers than a whole lifetime of holy and peaceful living. So in the ordinary histories of the Wars of the Roses in England one would scarcely gain a hint of the progress and development of the people, while the leaders were busy with fighting.

Whate'er of folly, shame, or crime
Within thy mighty bounds transpires
With speed defying space and time
Comes to us on the accusing wires;

While all thy wealth of noble deeds,
Thy homes of peace, thy votes unsold,
Thy love that pleads for human needs,
The wrongs redressed, but half is told!

Each poor wretch, in his prison cell
Or gallows-noose, is interviewed;
We know the single sinner well,
And not the nine and ninety good.

Yet, if on daily scandals fed,
We seem at times to doubt thy worth,
We know thee still, when all is said,
The best, the dearest spot on earth.

— Whittier.

"It would be a mistake to suppose that there was nothing, during all the centuries covered by this book, but an unbroken series of apostasies and judgments. It would be as correct to infer from a modern criminal calendar that there were none but law-breakers in the country. — *Professor Green.*

SIN AND SUFFERING. 10. All that generation. The example and influence of the men who had experienced God's wonderful dealings lasted a long time. But new men grew up under new influences, and there was a change.

11. And the children of Israel did evil. They first forgot God (v. 10). Their faith lost its reality and power. The decay of faith is the prelude to the decay of morals. In the sight of the Lord, in the presence of his commandments, and in view of his works of goodness, and his past punishments of sin. The sin was treason toward their God. It was rebellion to his face. Practical infidelity follows swiftly upon the heels of speculative infidelity. Decay of morals inevitably follows decay of faith. A curious proof of this fact is imbedded in almost every language, in those words whose primary signification implies unbelief and whose secondary meaning is expressive of practical wickedness. *Decay of Morals.*

For example, *miscreant* first signified a *misbeliever*, then a *vile wretch*; the word *unprincipled* first had reference to *speculative religious opinions*, then passed over into its more common signification of *profligate and vicious*. — *D. Steele, D. D.* And served: the true religion is a service of love and reverence; but all false religion is a service of superstition and terror. The impenitent often think that by refraining from being Christians they escape service; while, on the contrary, they serve Satan, who is a cruel master and whose wages are death. — *Johnson.* Baalim, the plural of Baal. Baalim is

12. And they ¹ forsook the LORD ² God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed ³ other gods, of the gods of the ⁴ people that *were* round about them, and ⁵ bowed themselves ⁶ unto them, ⁷ and provoked the LORD to anger.

16. ⁸ Nevertheless the LORD ⁹ raised up judges, which ¹⁰ delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

¹ Deut. 31: 16. ² Deut. 6: 14. ³ Ex. 20: 5. Rev Ver.: *π* the God. *ο* peoples. *ρ* down unto.
⁴ Judg. 3: 9, 10, 15. ⁵ 1 Sam. 12: 11. Acts 13: 20. *q* and they. *r* and the. *s* saved.

an intensive plural, great lord, or supreme lord, like Elohim, the Hebrew word for God, which is in the plural. — *Prof. C. A. Briggs*. Or it represents the variety of offices and attributes of the god.

THE CONTRAST. (1) Baal was the god of absolute sovereignty, exciting terror in his worshippers on the one side, and on the other, through Ashera, bestowing pleasures of sense. Jehovah was the living personal God, entering into communion with his people in tender relationships, such as sonship and marriage. (2) Baal was worshipped in the use of images of wood, stone, bronze, silver, and gold, and pillars of stone. These images and pillars were set up by the side of altars as places of sacrifice, upon high places, either on hills or artificial mounds, towers or roofs of palaces, and sometimes in temples. Baal was worshipped by kissing his images (*1 Kings 19: 18*), enthusiastic dances, cutting of the person, and other ecstatic rites (*1 Kings 18: 26-28*), by incense and sacrifices, but the choicest sacrifice was an only son. The favorite form of sacrifice to his consort Ashtaroth was prostitution. Jehovah was worshipped without images, an unseen but infinite eternal God. He was worshipped by sacrifices every part of which was full of spiritual meaning, showing the people the awful evil of sin, teaching holiness, purity, consecration, communion with God, brotherly love. — Condensed from *Prof. C. A. Briggs*, in *Sunday-School Times*.

ONE CAUSE of their sin is referred to in *3: 6*, their close social relations with the heathen. The Israelites were intended to be a separate people. They were not trained enough nor strong enough to live a pure and holy life while in close contact with the heathen. They needed to be separate and pure, and then by example and kindness they could teach and elevate the nations. It is well in things indifferent to obey the maxim, "While in Rome, do as Rome does." But in morals it is an utterly false principle. Do right and thus help Rome to do right.

WHAT WAS THE GREAT ATTRACTION OF IDOLATRY *that made the people fall into it so often?* (1) It was a visible representation of God, while Jehovah was unseen. (2) The temptation of novelty. (3) The desire to be like the other nations who, in some respects, were more fashionable and worldly. (4) The sports and revels connected with idolatrous worship, appealing to every passion, and more specially tempting to the Israelites, whose worship was purity itself. In the revels of idolaters there was no restraint, no confession of sin, no costly sacrifices except to passion, but they could serve every evil in the name and under the sanction of their gods.

Vice is a monster of such hideous mien
 That to be hated needs but to be seen;
 But seen too oft, familiar with its face,
 We first endure, then pity, then embrace. — *Pope*.

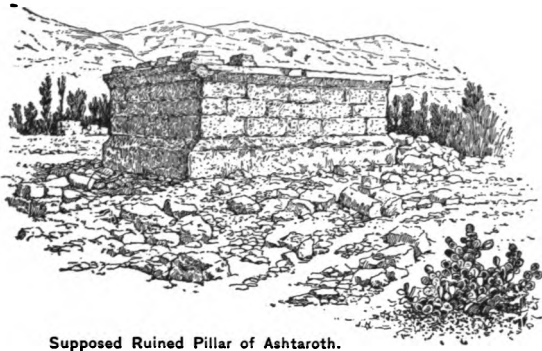
12. **Provoked the Lord to anger.** Not passion, not vindictiveness, but indignation; an intense feeling against sin. Sin is directly opposed to the nature of God. It was bringing ruin upon his children and defeating his desires for the salvation of his people and the world. The people were throwing away his best gifts, and it was necessary to punish them where he wished to bless.

*The Lord's
Indignation.*

THE RESULT was that the surrounding nations were allowed to be the instrument for their punishment. This was wise, for it tended to make the people averse to the things which tempted them. So mothers often put something bitter upon the food they do not wish their children to eat.

DELIVERANCE. 16. **Nevertheless.** God punishes his people, but he does not destroy them. As soon as his discipline has led them to repentance and to a better life he delivers them from the evils their sins have brought upon them. **The Lord raised up.** By endowing them with the necessary qualities, leading them to the needful training, and summoning them to their work. **Judges, which delivered them.** The Jewish judges were more

like Peter the Hermit and Jeanne d'Arc than like Roman dictators. — *Seelye*. They denote those occasional leaders and chief magistrates of the Israelites who led out the people to war against their enemies, and after having delivered them from the oppression of the neighboring nations, exercised each during peace the office of chief ruler and judge of Israel. Still, the predominant idea conveyed by the term is rather that of military commanders. — *Johnson*. They were saviours or liberators. They were raised up as occasion demanded, because the Israelites were not intended to be a military people, or to extend their territory by conquests, but to be a peaceful nation, trained up in righteousness.



Supposed Ruined Pillar of Ashtaroth.

DEVELOPMENT. A real growth was going on during these periods of suffering and anarchy, and of deliverance and peace. "They learned by perpetual struggle to defend their new home, and the free exercise of their religion, and so they prepared for coming generations a sacred place where that religion and national culture might develop. During the long pause of apparent inaction, a hidden movement was going on, and the principles and truths so marvellously brought to light were taking firm root." — *Ewald*. The progress was like the winding road up a mountain, often seeming to reverse the former direction, yet with always an upward trend. It was like the coming in of the tides, by waves, with constant reactions, yet on the whole the tide is gaining.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

The *Cambridge Bible*, The *Expositor's Bible*, *Commentaries*, by Cook, Keil and Delitzsch, Lange, Bush, Ellicott, Henry, Pool; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, II.; Lang's *Gideon and the Judges*; Edersheim's *Israel under Joshua and the Judges*; Groser's *Joshua and His Successors*; Wiseman's *Men of Faith*; Dod's *Israel's Iron Age*; Principal Douglass on the *Judges*; Stanley's *Jewish Church*; Smith's *Old Testament History*; On Baal and Ashtaroth, see *Land and Book*, new ed., III., 486.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. There is for all of us much land yet to be possessed, — in our own hearts, in gospel truth, in the application of the gospel to daily life, in Christian experience, in ethics, in the power of the Spirit, in gaining the world for Christ.
2. We often fail because we want rest before we have fully gained the victory. Rest after victory is the only rest that endures.
3. Seasons of repentance and religious revival have a real effect, although not all the effect desired.
4. Remaining sins, bad habits, wrong thoughts are a perpetual source of temptation, disaster, and trouble.
5. The world, money, pleasure, self are the Baals which modern men worship.
6. There is great danger in making intimate friendships with the world, its evil customs and fashions. It is the business of God's people not to follow bad customs, but to change them.
7. From the sources of sin come also the punishments of sin.

The gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us.

— *Shakespeare*.

8. There can be no departure from God and his commandments without suffering as a consequence.

"With repentance, his only companion, he lay,
And a dismal companion was he."

9. God desires all men to be saved from their sins and troubles, and uses every means to help them.

10. As soon as any one is willing to repent and return to God, he is ready to welcome and forgive.

11. The whole of life is a training school.

12. Progress is seldom continuous, but is a zigzag way upward, a mountain journey up and down the hills, but with a general upward trend.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Study the book of Judges and the period of the judges as a whole.

SUBJECT: DISCIPLINE AND PROGRESS.

I. IMPERFECT CONQUEST AND ITS DANGERS (vs. 1-5).

Illustration. The progress of a soul or of a nation is like the coming of spring. There are days of great warmth and sudden uplift, but followed often by cold and snow, often even blizzards. But these pass away much more quickly than the winter snows. Gradually, even while men are complaining that spring is never coming, the leaves and blossoms appear on the trees.

Illustration. The church in the world has been compared to the gulf stream, — a warm stream flowing through a cold ocean; icebergs in it, indeed, and itself not so warm as it should be, but far warmer than the chill waters through which it flows, and bringing a warm climate to American and European shores which would be almost barren and uninhabitable without it.

Illustration. The Scotch woman said that most of those found backsliding had not gone very far forward. The top that spins fast stands firm. When it goes slowly it falls easily.

II. THE DEATH OF JOSHUA (vs. 6-10). The influence of a good leader.

Illustration. Tennyson's *Idyls of the King*, "Sir Galahad."

III. THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES (vs. 11, 12, 16).

Illustration. I had moved into a new house; and, in looking over it, I noticed a very clean-looking cask, headed up at both ends. I debated with myself whether I should have it taken out of the cellar, and opened to see what was in it, but concluded, as it looked empty and nice, to leave it undisturbed, especially as it would be quite a piece of work to get it upstairs. I did not feel quite easy. Every spring and fall I would remember that cask with a little twinge of conscience, from the thought of a house not perfectly cleaned while it remained unopened, for how could I know but under its fair exterior it contained some hidden evil? For two or three years the innocent-looking cask stood quietly in my cellar; then most unaccountably moths began to fill the house. I used every precaution against them in vain. They increased rapidly, and threatened to ruin everything I had. I suspected carpets, and had them cleaned. I suspected my furniture, and had it newly upholstered. At last the thought of the cask flashed upon me. It was brought up, its head was knocked in, and thousands of moths poured out. The previous occupant of the house must have headed it up with something in it that bred moths, and this was the cause of all the trouble. Now, I believe that, in the same way, some innocent-looking habit or indulgence, about which we now and then have little twinges of conscience, lies at the root of most of the failure in this higher life. — *The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*.

Illustration.

Thou, too, sail on, O ship of state;
Sail on, O Union, strong and great.
Humanity with all its fears,
With all its hopes of future years,
Is hanging breathless on thy fate.

We know what master laid thy keel,
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,
Who made each mast, and rail, and rope,
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
In what a forge, in what a heat
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope.

In spite of rock and tempest's roar,
In spite of false lights on the shore,
Sail on, nor fear to breast the sea,
Our hearts, our hopes are all with thee.

Our hearts, our hopes, our prayers, our tears,
Our faith triumphant o'er our fears,
Are all with thee.

— *Longfellow*.

LESSON II.—OCTOBER 13.

THE TRIUMPH OF GIDEON.—JUDGES 7: 13-23.

Golden Text.—*Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear.*—PSA. 27: 3.

THE SECTION includes chapters 6, 7, and 8, together with a glance at the remainder of the book. Compare 1 Corinthians 1: 25-29.

TIME.—About B.C. 1222. Two hundred years after the death of Joshua; Gideon's judgeship extended from B.C. 1222-1182.

PLACE.—Gideon's home was in Ophrah, near Shechem. The gathering of his army was some distance to the north, at the fountain of Harod, near the hill Moreh. It was at the foot of Mount Gilboa, some fifteen or twenty miles southwest of the Sea of Galilee, and in the southern part of what in our Lord's time was called Galilee. It was near this place that Saul fought his last battle (1 Sam. 29: 1 and 31: 1).

RUTH probably lived during the times of Gideon.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—Our enemies (Eph. 6: 11; 1 John 2: 15, 16). Faith the source of Gideon's power (Heb. 11: 32, 33). God's victories with feeble means (1 Cor. 1: 27, 28). The armor and qualities of the Christian soldier (Eph. 6: 13-18).

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Bā'rāk; Dēb'ōrāh; E'hūd; Esdrā-ē'lōn; Gid'ēōn; Hā'rōd; Jērūb'bāal; Mō'rēh; Nāph'tālī; Oth'niēl; Oph'rāh; Shām'gār.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Course of Events.—During the two hundred years since the death of Joshua there had been three great relapses into idolatry, followed by the punishment of oppression by their enemies. And when the bitter experience had done its work, and the people repented of their sin, Judges were raised up who delivered them. The effect of the suffering and of the deliverance, the mingled severity and goodness of God, preserved them in peace and prosperity for a generation, so that out of the two hundred years before Gideon there were but fifty-three years of oppression, including that from which Gideon delivered Israel. During this time Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, and Barak, with his partner, Deborah, were the Judges.

II. Seven Years' Oppression by the Midianites.—6: 1-6. The plain of Esdraelon (the Greek form of Jezreel), northeast of the Carmel range, was the most productive grain-growing region of the Holy Land. "Almost every acre," says Mr. Oliphant, "is at this moment in the highest state of cultivation." It looks to-day like a huge green lake of waving wheat, with its village-crowned mounds rising from it, like islands." "The whole plain of Esdraelon, as well as part of the hills behind, is now owned by one rich firm of Syrian bankers, who draw an annual income of about \$200,000 from it." (See *Haifa*, p. 42, 59, 60.) A distinguished American traveller, speaking of a view of which Esdraelon is a leading feature, pronounces it the finest that he ever saw in any part of the world.—*John M. Lang, D.D.*

Plain of Esdraelon.

This delightful spot is "an island in the midst of pirates, the Bedouin tribes, who are the Corsairs of the wilderness."—*Stanley*. The wandering hordes of the desert, the predominating power being the Midianites, who were the travelling merchant men of the East, coveted the riches of this favored region *Midianite Hordes*. which seemed the very gates of paradise; and to the number of at least 135,000 (Judg. 8: 10) "streamed over the fords of the Jordan year by year, migrating thither, with their households and herds, in such numbers as could only be compared, by those whom they invaded, to a flight of locusts; which, indeed, they rivalled in destructiveness."—*Geikie*. "They swept over almost the whole land, pitched their tents, and fed their camels in the midst of the rich cornfields of Israel. This was the most extensive and destructive servitude the nation had yet suffered. The people fled to mountain fastnesses, and hid themselves in caves, and a grievous famine ensued."—*Dean Milman*. All this continued for seven years (6: 1). Of course there were endless fights and skirmishes with the Midianites, and in them Gideon's brothers had been slain (8: 18).

APPLICATIONS. 1. So God's church during the ages has been exposed to many assaults from the world; sometimes the worldly spirit has overrun it; sometimes the hordes of false doctrines, of dead forms, of ungodly ease have sought to plunder its treasures. 2. So "the holy land" of each soul, where God should be king, has often been overrun by wrong thoughts, ambitions, lusts of the flesh, hatred, indolence, selfishness. These devastate God's heritage.

III. A Prophet Shows the Cause.—6: 7-10. When the people cried to the Lord in their distress, a prophet was sent to show them that it was on account of their sins. It was sin that had taken away the wall of defence which would have made them secure. God himself was their fortress, so that they need "not be afraid for the terror by night, nor for the arrow that flieth by day. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand, but it shall not come nigh thee. For he shall give his angels charge over thee." The people had refused their only defence, and the enemy came like a flood.

The prophets' message helped to prepare the people for deliverance. Not till they repented could there be safety. Otherwise God would have rewarded disobedience and encouraged it.

IV. Gideon Called to Deliver His

Countrymen.—6: 11-24. Gideon (*feller of trees*) was the son of Joash the Abiezrite (*i.e.*, descendant of Abiezer). He was born at Ophrah, in the tribe of Manasseh, about 1260 years before Christ. He was a man of highly noble person, and of a noble race, like the son of a king, and whose brothers "each one resembled the children of a king" (Judg. 8: 18). He was a man of strong common sense, a patriot, a true lover of God, cautious, modest, brave, and enthusiastic. The signs of the fleece (Judg. 6: 36-40), says Ewald, illustrate Gideon's own character; warm and zealous, while all around were indifferent and cold; calm and cool, when all around were excited.

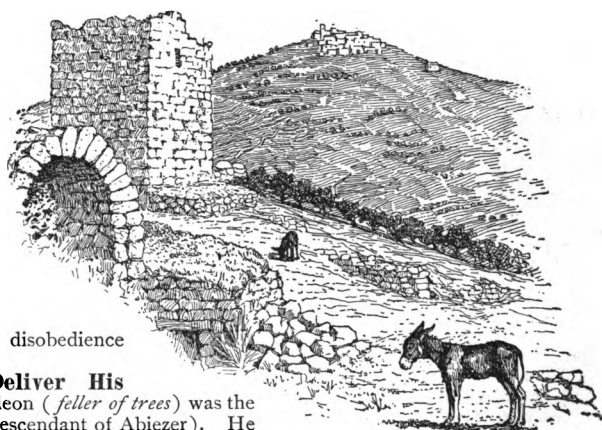
An angel from the Lord came to Gideon while he was threshing wheat secretly in a wine-press near his home to avoid the notice of the Midianitish hordes (6: 11-22), and appointed him to be the deliverer of the people. Gideon was probably a middle-aged man at this time, for he had a son of his own almost grown up (8: 20). The angel's words imply that he had in him both piety and heroism. God chooses fitting instruments for his work. "Like Cincinnatus at his farm, and David among his sheep, and Cromwell in the flats of Huntingdonshire, and Washington on his plantation in Virginia, Gideon was quietly doing his humble task, not wishing nor dreaming of a wider horizon or more conspicuous work, when the summons came to him, the divine Voice that dragged him from peaceful privacy and thrust him to the front."—*Alexander MacLaren, D.D.*

LESSONS. 1. Gideon had the wise caution to make himself sure that he was called of God before he went on with his work. True, strong faith wants a sure foundation on which to stand. It is credulity, not faith, which accepts things as true without thorough examination and proof.

2. This work to which Gideon was called was practically a revival of religion. All through this history we see that the object was to bring the people back to the love and service of God, and to holier lives.

3. When God has a work to do, he does it through his children. He raises up men as his instruments, as Paul, Luther, Washington, and all the long list.

4. Like Gideon, "prophets, and law givers, and God's heroes ever shrink from great tasks, and are humbled, not exalted, when large fields of service open before them. It is the spirit in which alone true work for God is ever done. Braggart self-confidence and ambitious seeking for high positions, as peacocks will get up on a wall to show their tails, should have no place in the hearts of God's soldiers."—*MacLaren.*



Ophrah.

V. Gideon Prepared for His Work. — 6: 24-40. Whenever God has a work for a man to do, he prepares the man for his work. He that is unwilling to be prepared may be sure that he is not called.

FIRST. All his previous faithfulness in daily life, his unselfishness, his piety had been preparing him unconsciously for the great work of his life.

SECOND. He was prepared by religious worship. In the house of God, in pure religious devotion, is found the atmosphere which inspires the soul, corrects the judgment, clears the vision, leads to right decisions. The house of God is not only the gate of heaven, but the gate to the best deeds and the largest usefulness.

THIRD. He was prepared for his larger work by a lesser duty which required the same qualities, and which tested his fitness, awoke in him a consciousness of his own possibilities, through the aid of God, strengthened his faith in God, and proved the weakness of the gods on which Israel's enemies depended. Gideon had a work to do in his own village and in his father's house. That very night Gideon bravely threw down the altar of Baal. And not only cut down the pillar of Ashtaroth, but split it up for fuel; and, having laid it on the altar of Jehovah, used it to consume, in sacrifice to him, a bullock which his father had apparently consecrated to Baal. Gideon's action was like that of the brave Hawaiian princess Kapiolani, who defied the very home of the idols her people worshipped, on the brink of a terrible volcano. The citizens were angry when they discovered what Gideon had done, and would have put him to death, but his father's clever irony saved him.

*Casting down the
Image of Baal.*

This test was both for himself, to give him confidence, and as a proof to the Israelites that he had the qualities of a leader in God's service. So David knew for himself and could prove to others that he could meet Goliath, by having first slain the lion and the bear.

FOURTH. Gideon tested the promises of God, so that his faith was strengthened by God's answer to his prayer in the matter of the fleece, as Aaron and Moses were encouraged by the rod changed to a serpent, to go before Pharaoh and do great wonders at the word of the Lord. It was also a convincing argument to the people.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. 1. By daily duties done from worthy motives we are prepared for our life's work. Life is ennobled by doing even the smallest actions with the noblest motives.

"We rise by things that are under our feet,
By what we have mastered of good and gain,
By the pride deposed, and the passion slain,
And the vanquished ills that we hourly meet."

2. By lesser works faithfully done we are prepared for the larger works God may give us to do. By being faithful in that which is least, we can be trusted with that which is much. The five pounds fit us to rule the five cities.

3. God is ever ready to strengthen our faith, by special acts of his providence, by wonderful answers to prayer, by the marvellous works recorded in his Word, and all through the history of his people.

"Think not of rest though dreams be sweet,
Start up and ply your heavenward feet."

VI. Gideon's Army and its Preparation. — 6: 34, 35; 7: 1-7. Gideon sent messengers throughout the four neighboring tribes, Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, summoning them to the war of liberation. Thirty-two thousand came (7: 3), and assembled at the well Harod in the foothills of Mount Gilboa on the borders of Esdraelon. They

thus looked upon the one hundred and thirty-five thousand Midianites in the valley and on the hillsides of Moreh. No wonder that so many of them were afraid.

The plain of Esdraelon has in all ages been the battle field of Palestine. Here fought Thothmes III., Rameses II., and Rameses III.; here Pharaoh Necho won that sad battle of Megiddo, in which King Josiah was slain, amidst a slaughter so terrible that the great conflict of the Apocalypse is called, from it, the battle of Armageddon — "the hill of Megiddo." Here

*Battles on
Esdraelon.*



Threshing Wheat.

have fought in turn the armies of Assyria, of the Crusaders, and of Bonaparte; and it was on the mountains of Gilboa, at its east end, that Saul and Jonathan perished. — *Geikie*.

THE OBJECT of this deliverance from God was not chiefly to save the people's farms and crops from the Midianites, but to save them from their sins, and to teach them to trust and obey God. Hence the method of gaining the victory; for the victory would amount to very little unless it taught the people that all their hope was in God, and in obeying him, and thus led them to trust in the power and goodness of God, and to cleave to him as their only Saviour. The army was subjected to two tests.

THE FIRST TEST was the permission for all who were afraid in the presence of the wild and warlike hordes, who outnumbered them four to one, to go quietly home. Twenty-two thousand, or more than two thirds, returned home. This fear showed clearly that the people needed to be taught the lesson of faith which followed.

THE SECOND TEST was for the remaining ten thousand. It consisted of the way they drank of the water of a brook on the march. Three hundred "did not break rank or stop in their march, but dipped their hollowed palm into the stream, and tossed a little in their mouth as they ran," "as a dog, running along the bank of a shallow stream, and without stopping, snatches mouthfuls or tonguefuls of water, too intent on his pursuit to take a leisurely drink, never even while slaking his thirst turning aside or pausing from the chase." — *Marcus Dods*. These were retained. The remaining nine thousand seven hundred stopped in their march, "unbuckled their swords, and eased their armor and knelt down to drink." — *Elmslie*. These were sent home.

HOW THIS WAS A TEST of their fitness. God gives no useless tests. "Gideon needed men of endurance, Spartan in habit, and caring more about the grim task they had to do than about ease. He was like the old Highland chief who kicked away the snowball which his son had rolled for a pillow on a *Test by the Method of Drinking*. foray, rebuking the degeneracy and luxury of the age." — *McLaren*.

1. The three hundred showed more of the spirit of soldiers eager for the battle. They had doubtless experience either in the soldier's life, or in labors that required strength, courage, and endurance.

2. The three hundred showed more care for others and for the cause, in so drinking as not to hinder the march, or break the ranks, or interfere with the progress of the army. They were the least self-indulgent, and slaked their thirst with moderation.

3. The most apparent natural reason seems to be that, as the season was hot, and most of the soldiers would be thirsty, all but a few of the freshest or least fatigued of them would be apt to drink a great deal, and be unfit for further immediate service, as Orientals are apt to do in such circumstances. — *Prof. I. Hall*.

4. Probably the more prevalent Jewish interpretation is also correct. The worship of Baal was accompanied by prolonged prostrations, so that his worshippers became accustomed to this attitude, and it was more natural for them to assume it in drinking. The others, who remained erect, had not been brought up in his worship, but in that of Jehovah. True religion always cultures those qualities which give even earthly success, while superstition benumbs them. — *Johnson*.

WHY SO SMALL A NUMBER CHOSEN. (1) In order that the Israelites might plainly see that the victory was from God, and not from themselves. (2) To remind them that the God who had done wonders for their fathers was unchanged, and able and willing to do great things for them. (3) To shame and humble his people for their past cowardice in tamely submitting to the yoke of Midian. (4) Thus the people would be led to God by his goodness and his greatness, and would worship and obey him.

MODERN APPLICATIONS. 1. The first condition of a revival of religion is for God's people to be in such a position that all the honor will be given to God, and not to the human instrumentality; though God uses the instrumentality.

2. God's people are to be measured, rather than counted. Not numbers, but quality tells.

3. God tests his workers in various ways. Martyr times, hard work, reproaches, unpopular duties and truths, missionary labors test the quality of God's people.

4. "Christianity requires *men*. If thou canst not resolve to follow him through infamy, prisons, racks, gibbets, flames, depart to thine house, and save thy life to thy loss." — *Bishop Hall*. "Yet he appoints his poor, weak, sinful, and sinning human children for the great deliverances of themselves, their kindred, their nation, their race. We are the children, not the paupers, of God's bounty." — *G. W. Cable*.

5. Many who have real faith and grace are unfit for special services, and unable to bear peculiar trials, from which, therefore, the Lord will exempt them, and to which he will appoint those to whom he has given superior hardiness, boldness, and firmness of spirit. — *Scott*.

13. And when Gideon was come, behold, *there was* a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the ^ahost of Midian, and came unto ^ba tent, and smote it that it fell, and ^coverturned it, that the tent lay along.

14. And his fellow answered and said, This *is* nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: ^dfor into his hand ^ehath God delivered Midian, and all the host.

15. And it was *so*, when Gideon heard the telling of the dream, and the interpretation thereof, that he worshipped, and ^freturned into the ^ghost of Israel, and said, Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian.

16. And he divided the three hundred men *into* three companies, and he ^hput a trumpet in every man's hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.

17. And he said unto them, Look on me, and do likewise: and, behold, when I come to the ⁱoutside of the camp, it shall be *that*, as I do, so shall ye do.

Rev. Ver.: ^a camp.	^d omit for.	^h put into the hands of all of them trumpets and
^b the.	^e God hath.	ⁱ empty pitchers, with torches within.
^c turned it upside down.	^f he returned.	ⁱ outermost part.
	^g camp.	

6. Our characters are revealed in our every act, even the most trivial and unconscious.

7. We should never be discouraged because our numbers are small and our instrumentalities feeble. "One with God is a majority."

8. Gideon's victory was a prophecy of almost all the victories of good over evil. Christianity itself, the cause of Christ in each town or country. Modern missions are examples.

VII. **Encouragements.** — 7: 9-15. There was danger that even the stout hearts of Gideon and his three hundred heroes might quail at their perilous position. One more encouragement is therefore given. God told Gideon that if he had any fear he should take his servant by night down to the host of the Midianites.

13. When Gideon was come to the enemy's encampment, he overheard one of them telling to his companion a dream he had just dreamed. A cake of barley bread, the food of the poor and of beasts, suggested by the scarcity among the Israelites. Came unto a tent. It should be *the* tent, that of the king or captain of the host. — Cook. And smote it that it fell. This poor little cake caused a great destruction, altogether beyond its natural power. Bush thinks that "tent" is here a collective noun, for the tents of the army, and "it came among them like a ball among nine-pins, prostrating everything in its course."

14. His fellow answered, interpreting the dream as signifying Gideon and his little army; the Midianites, of course, saw this army and had heard something of Gideon. This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon, etc. Hearing this dream and the interpretation would tell in two ways to strengthen Gideon's hands. First, the coincidence would convince him that he was indeed under the guidance of God, and so assure him of God's aid; and, secondly, it would show him that a panic had already fallen upon the mind of the enemy, that he was an object of terror to them. — Cook.

15. Arise; for the Lord hath delivered, etc. Gideon tells his story to his little army, for their encouragement. And now everything is ready.

VIII. **The Strange Battle and Victory.** — Vs. 16-23. 16. And he divided the three hundred into three companies, under leaders. They seem to have stretched in a line nearly or quite around the enemy's camp, the men placed at considerable distance one from another (v. 18), as the object was not to fight, but to terrify. Trumpets, pitchers, and lamps, which were obtained from the numbers who went home. This explains how each of the three hundred was supplied. The lamps were firebrands or torches. (See Judg. 15: 4, 5, where the same word is used.) Trumpets were not usually in the hands of common soldiers, nor were lamps, or, rather, torches. These belonged only to leaders, so that each of the hundred would appear to the Midianites as a leader of a large band. The pitchers were to cover the torches from being seen, making, as it were, a dark lantern. They also aided confusion by the noise of their breaking.

18. When I blow ¹ with a trumpet, I and all that *are* with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, ² *The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.*

19. So Gideon, and the hundred men that *were* with him, came unto the ¹ outside of the camp in the beginning of the middle watch; ¹ and they had but newly set the watch: and they blew the trumpets, and ^m brake the pitchers that *were* in their hands.

20. And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the ⁿ lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow *withal*: and they cried, *The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon.*

21. And they ¹ stood every man in his place round about the camp: ² and all the host ran, ^o and cried, and fled.

22. And ^p the three hundred ³ blew the trumpets, and ⁴ the LORD set ⁵ every man's sword against his fellow, ⁴ even throughout all the host: and the host fled ^r to Beth-shittah in Zererah, *and* to the border of Abelmeholah, ^s unto Tabbath.

23. And the men of Israel ^t gathered themselves together out of Naphtali, and out of Asher, and out of all Manasseh, and pursued after ^u the Midianites.

¹ Ex. 14: 13, 14. ² Chron. 20: 17.

² Kings 7: 7.

³ Josh. 6: 4, 16, 20. ² Cor. 4: 7.

⁴ Psa. 83: 9. Isa. 9: 4.

⁵ 1 Sam. 14: 20. ² Chron. 20: 23.

Rev. Ver.: ^j the trumpet.

^k For the LORD and for Gideon.

^l when.

^m brake in pieces.

ⁿ torches.

^o and they shouted and put them to flight.

^p they blew the three hundred trumpets.

^q and against all.

^r as far as Beth-shittah toward Zererah, as far as the.

^s by.

^t were gathered together.

^u Midian.

18. **The sword of the Lord, Jehovah, the real commander, the source of power.** The one who had overthrown Pharaoh and Jericho, and had made the sun and moon stand still for Joshua. **And Gideon, the leader of this host.**

The stratagem of Gideon was simple. The torches were concealed in the large pitchers, or bread-jars, until the men had taken their stations, so that their movement might not be detected. It was the duty of the leader of a band to blow the trumpet and give the war-cry. By him, in a night attack, stood a torch-bearer to light the way, and guide the soldiers so that they might always know where to find the leader; the torch at night was like the banner of day. Three hundred trumpets and torches represented three hundred companies of troops. The breaking of the jars, the outflashing of the lights, the deafening blare of trumpets on every side aroused the enemy from sleep. The Israelites seemed by the many lights and trumpets to be present in overwhelming numbers. Each heathen in the darkness mistook his neighbor for a foe. They slew one another. The panic was universal. The invaders, encumbered with women and children and plunder of flocks and herds, as nomadic invaders are always cumbered, fled in confusion, and scattered over the country, throughout which Gideon immediately sent runners to arouse the people. The fords of the Jordan were seized by the Israelites, and the destruction of the invaders was complete. The Midianites were so utterly annihilated that they do not reappear on the page of history (Judg. 6: 11-25; 7: 8: 1-28). — *Johnson.*

LESSONS. 1. God encourages his people in many ways and at many times.

2. We can often take encouragement from the complaints and unconscious confessions of the enemy.

3. In the Christian warfare the *trumpets* express our power of speaking for God. The *lamps* are our character and example, lighted by God's grace, and shining for men; and the *pitchers* represent our capacity of receiving the truth and the spirit of God. Thus armed, the Christian can enter upon the warfare against evil with the certainty of victory.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Lang's *Gideon and the Judges*, in *The Men of the Bible Series*; the *Commentaries* referred to in the last lesson; *Land and Book*, new ed., II., 177-184; Marcus Dods' *Israel's Iron Age*; R. Wheeler Bush on *Joshua and Judges*; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*; Stanley's *Jewish Church*; Fuller's *Pisgah Sight of Palestine*, Bk. II., chap. 8, § 11; E. Paxton Hood's *Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets*; Bossuet's "Sermon on the Prince of Condé," in *Pulpit Orators of France*; Talmage's *Sermons* (ser. 2); an excellent sermon by McLaren in the *Sunday-School Times* for August 11, 1883; Oliphant's *Haifa*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

The whole story should be read and taught.

SUBJECT: FIGHTING THE LORD'S BATTLES.

I. THE ENEMY TO BE OVERCOME. The hordes of sin. A spiritual warfare against the principalities and powers of evil. The most glorious and noble warfare in the world is that against sin.

Illustration. The war against Mansoul in Bunyan's *Holy War*.

II. PREPARATIONS FOR THE GREAT WORK.

Illustration. The Duke of Wellington, revisiting Eton, where he had received his early education, pointed to the playground and said, "There the battle of Waterloo was won."

Illustration. An anarchist was converted to Christ, and expressed the change after the following fashion: "My brothers, once my creed was this, 'Down with everything that is up,' but it has changed, and now I say, 'Up with everything that is down.' One means destruction, the other building."

III. THE SUMMONS.

Illustration. Sir Walter Scott, both in his romances and his poems, refers to the beautiful custom of ancient Scotland of assembling their clans by means of the *fiery cross*. A light cross of wood was charred at its point, and the flames quenched in the blood of a goat. This was sent around to the villages and homes of the clan, each one sending it on to his next neighbor, with only the name of the meeting-place. And every one was bound under fearful anathemas to obey the sign. The summons was swift and sure.

"When flits this cross from man to man,
Vich Alpine's summons to his clan,
Burst be the ear that fails to heed!
Palsied the foot that shuns to speed!"

IV. THE ARMY TESTED AND ENCOURAGED (vs. 13-15).

Illustrations. Our characters are shown in our most trivial acts and words. Character has often been read by the handwriting. One's nationality, even the part of the country he comes from, his education, etc., are shown by slight variations in speech, or movements of the body. It is said that naturalists can tell the whole animal from one of the teeth or bones. Some years ago a sea captain brought to England, from Madagascar, a peculiar bone from a collection he had found of some extinct species of animals. It was put in the hands of the great naturalist Owen. He saw that it was the bone of the foot of some large bird, and from this single bone he drew a picture of the bird to which it must have belonged, and the drawing was placed in the British Museum. Some years afterwards the same captain brought the rest of the bones. They were put together, and placed alongside of Professor Owen's picture, when it was found that the professor had correctly seen the whole bird in the one bone.

V. THE STRANGE VICTORY (vs. 16-23).

EXAMPLES (1 Cor. 1: 24-29). Jesus with the simple gospel conquering the Roman empire. Note what his gospel has done the last one hundred years.

REFER to the famous battle of Thermopylae, where the immortal three hundred defended the pass against the immense army of the Persians.

LESSON III.—OCTOBER 20.

RUTH'S CHOICE.—RUTH 1: 14-22.

Golden Text.—*Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.*—RUTH 1: 16.

THE SECTION includes the whole book of Ruth.

THE BOOK OF RUTH is an appendix to the book of Judges, and throws a charming but true light over the troublous times we have been studying in our last few lessons. The book of Ruth, lifting up the curtain which veiled the privacy of domestic life, discloses to us most beautiful views of piety, integrity, self-sacrificing affection, chastity, gentleness, and charity, growing up amidst the rude scenes of war, discord, and strife.—*Cook.* In the most degenerate times there was preserved underneath the troubled surface many a pure, loving, religious life, as in the time of Elijah, when the prophet felt that he was the only servant of God in all Israel, the Lord knew that there were seven thousand who refused to bow the knee to Baal.

The author and date of the book are unknown.

TIME.—Keil, with great probability, places Ruth in the time of Gideon, B. C. 1222-1182. King David, her great-grandson, was born 1085, which fact, even if there are no generations omitted, may bring her place back to Gideon's period.

PLACE.—The early home of Naomi and the later one of Ruth was at Bethlehem, around which so many interesting events cluster.

The early home of Ruth was in Moab, east of the Dead Sea and Southern Jordan.

THE NAMES.—Elimelech, "My God is King"; Naomi, "the Lovable"; and their two sons, Mahlon, "the Sickly," and Chilion, "the Pining One"; Ruth, "the Friend," or "Beauty," or "Rose of Moab"; Orpah, a "Fawn"; Boaz, "Lovely," or "Active."

PICTURES.—UNMOUNTED PHOTOGRAPHS: "Ruth," by *Bruck-Lajos*. "The Return of Naomi," "Elimelech and Naomi," by *Bida*.

MAGIC LANTERN SLIDES: *Doré's* "Naomi and her Daughters-in-law," and "Boaz and Ruth."

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Bō'az; Chīl'ōn, or Chīl'ōn (ch=k); Elīm'ēlēch; Mā'rā; Māh'lōn; Nāō'mī, or Nā'ōmī; Or'pah; Rūth.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Emigrants.—During the rule of the Judges, probably near the time of Gideon, there arose a great famine in the land of Israel, which must have lasted several years. It may have been caused in part by the seven years' oppression of the Midianites, B. C. 1229-1222, from which Gideon delivered Israel. They devoured the land like grasshoppers. Drought came to add to the intensity of the famine.

At this time there lived a family at Bethlehem consisting of Elimelech, his wife Naomi, and two sons, whose names indicate feeble health. Finding it difficult to obtain a living on the home farm on account of the famine, and perhaps afraid of the roving bands of the invaders, the family determined to emigrate to some safer and more fruitful region, even though it would compel them to bring up their children amid heathen surroundings. They went across the Jordan, probably at the fords of Jericho, turned to the south along the eastern shores of the Dead Sea, and settled among the rich fields of the Moabites. Here great changes came to the family. In the course of ten years the sons married Moabitish women, and both sons and Elimelech, their father, died in the land of Moab, leaving the three women widows.

II. Leaving the Land of Their Sorrows.—It is plain that Naomi's personal character and her teachings, shining out through the night of sorrow, had commended to her family and neighbors the religion of the true God. But this was not her home, nor here the altars of her fathers. "As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panted" her soul for the living God and his people. Everything here reminded her of her loss. "The measure of her misery was pressed down, shaken together, running over."

This is truth the poet sings,
That a sorrow's crown of sorrow is remembering happier things. — *Tennyson*.

14. And they lifted up their voice, and wept again: and Orpah kissed her mother in law; but Ruth ¹ clave unto her.

15. And she said, Behold, thy sister in law is gone back unto her people, and unto ² her ^a gods: ³ return thou after thy sister in law.

16. And Ruth said, ⁴ Entreat me not to leave thee, ^b or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: ⁵ thy people *shall be* my people, and thy God my God:

¹ Prov. 17: 17; 18: 24.
² Judg. 11: 24.

³ Josh. 24: 15, 19. Luke 24: 28.
⁴ 2 Kings 2: 2, 4, 6. ⁵ Ruth 2: 11, 12.

Rev. Ver.: *a* god. *b* and.

We need not look upon this as a punishment, but as a discipline from the loving hand of God, which opens the door to better things. "Providence does not so come within our measurement. We had better attend to our prayers than to our criticisms. It is indeed a severer punishment still than any that fell upon the house of Elimelech to be cursed with the spirit of criticism."—*Joseph Parker*. The widowed Naomi, poor, in distress, among strangers, became homesick for her native land, her kindred, the people of God, and the religious aids and consolations of her youth. The famine is over, Gideon has overcome the oppressors, the people have turned toward God. Accordingly, she sets out on her return home.

III. The Parting Scene.—Vs. 14, 15. The two widowed daughters-in-law, Orpah and Ruth ("the Rose of Moab"), went part of the way to see Naomi off, as friends and relatives were accustomed to do, and as is still the custom in the East. When the time came to part, when they had kissed each other and wept together, they both declared they would not return, but would go with her to Israel. "Like a wise woman, she declined to take advantage of the impulse of passionate regret, which seemed adverse to their temporal welfare, and which their cooler judgment might not sanction, and urged them, by many strong arguments, to return. Once more they wept, but Orpah was prevailed upon, and gave Naomi the farewell kiss" (*Killo*), the customary friendly and respectful salutation in the East.—*Cook*. "Both had heroic resolutions; only one kept them." Orpah went back to her own people and to her old life. "She had been enlightened by Naomi concerning the difference in habits, customs, and hopes of Israel, but now she preferred her own tastes, and education, and prospects. Orpah, therefore, went back to her former gods. The saddest thing of all is that, if we think of her any more as a praying woman, we must picture her as worshipping the savage Chemosh, in rites of dangerous idolatry. We wonder whether she ever thought of her old prayers (2 Pet. 2: 20, 21)."—*C. S. Robinson*. "Orpah's kiss showed she had an affection for Naomi, and was loth to part from her, yet she did not love her well enough to leave her country for her sake. Thus, many have a value and affection for Christ, and yet fall short of salvation by him, because they cannot find it in their hearts to forsake other things for him. They love him, and yet leave him, because they do not love him enough, but love other things better. Thus the young man that went away from Christ went away sorrowful (Matt. 19: 22)."—*M. Henry*.

Orpah Returns Home.

"So from the heights of will
Life's parting stream descends,
And, as a moment turns its slender rill,
Each widening torrent bends.

From the same cradle side,
From the same mother's knee,
One to long darkness and the frozen tide,
One to the peaceful sea."

IV. Ruth's Choice.—Vs. 16-18. Naomi used the same arguments to Ruth that she did to Orpah. "God wrestled with Jacob with desire to be conquered; so Naomi, no doubt, opposed Ruth, hoping and wishing that she herself might be foiled."—*T. Fuller*. She would have Ruth fully understand her own mind, and realize what the decision would cost her. So in the parable of Christ (Luke 14: 26-33).

16. And Ruth said. "Ruth's passionate burst of tenderness is immortal. It has put into fitting words for all generations the deepest thoughts of loving hearts, and comes to us over all the centuries between as warm and living as when it welled up from that pure, heroic soul. The two strongest emotions of our nature are blended in it, and each gives a portion of its fervor—love and religion.—*Maclaren*. Entreat me not to leave thee. All that Naomi had said, her solitariness, poverty, sorrow only served to attach Ruth more firmly. Orpah, too, was attached and well disposed; but still, with eyes of love, although she had them, she yet saw herself, while Ruth saw only the beloved one. It might be said,

17. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: ¹ the LORD do so to me, and more also, *if aught* but death part thee and me.

18. °When ² she saw that she was steadfastly minded to go with her, ⁴ then she left speaking unto her.

19. So they two went until they came to Beth-lehem. And it came to pass, when they were come to Beth-lehem, that ³ all the city was moved about them, and °they said, ⁴ *Is this Naomi?*

¹ 1 Sam. 3: 17. 2 Sam. 19: 13. 2 Kings 6: 31. ² Acts 21: 14. ³ Matt. 21: 10. ⁴ Isa. 23: 7. Lam. 2: 15. Rev. Ver.: *c* And when. *d* omit then. *e* the women said.

with a certain degree of truth, that the same cause induced Orpah to go and Ruth to remain; the fact, namely, that Naomi had no longer either son or husband. She refuses to leave her, for the very reason that she is poor, old, and childless. Rather than to leave her to suffer alone, Ruth will starve with or beg for her. — *Cassell*. **Whither thou goest, I will go.** Compare the very similar entreaties of Elijah, and the steadfast determination of Elisha not to leave him (2 Kings 2: 2-6). In Elisha's case, as in Ruth's, the reward of steadfast persistence was very great. — *Cook*. Contrast some who in Christ's time undertook to follow him (Matt. 8: 18-22).

I am constant as the northern star,
Of whose true, fixed, and resting quality
There is no fellow in the firmament. — *Shakespeare*.

"True as the needle to the pole,
True as the branches to the vine."

Thy people shall be my people, even though she went apparently to lifelong poverty among strangers. But the blessedness that people had in the true God was infinitely greater than that she left, and transformed the dark clouds as the sun does with his setting glories. **And thy God my God.** She accepted the true religion, as it is shone in the example and teachings of her mother-in-law. All this passionate utterance of Ruth is a perfect type of what every one who becomes a Christian says to Christ and his church. He chooses them for better or for worse, in prosperity and in affliction. All he has and all he hopes for is joined with them. He will suffer with them, rejoice with them, work with them, worship with them, and at last abide forever with them in heaven.

17. Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried. She wished to be naturalized for life in Naomi's fatherland. — *Pulpit Commentary*. She gives herself up wholly and forever to the people of God. **The Lord do so to me:** calling upon herself the severest punishment if she should break her promise. Ruth's use of the name of Jehovah shows that she was already a believer.

18. She left speaking. Persevering love conquered all opposition.

RUTH'S CHOICE. 1. Like Mary, she chose the good part; she made the best possible choice. 2. She chose in full view of all the consequences. It was a well-considered choice. 3. Her choice was of spiritual good, of right, and duty, and religion, at the cost of poverty, and friendlessness, and toil. 4. She was led to her choice of the God and religion through human affection. 5. She chose irrevocably. It was a life choice.

Blest with this fellowship divine,
Take what thou wilt, I'll ne'er repine;
E'en as the branches to the vine,
My soul would cling to thee.

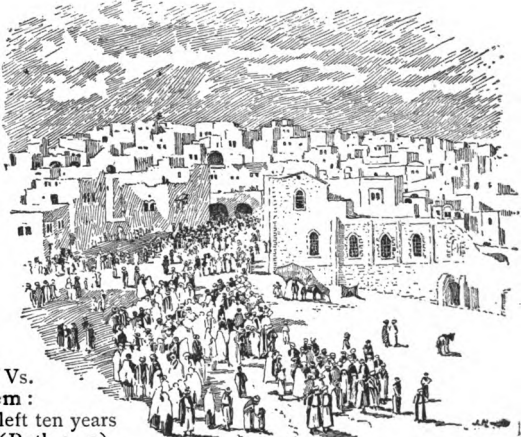
Far from her home, fatigued, oppressed,
Here she has found her place of rest;
An exile still, yet not unblest,
While she can cling to thee.

— *Mrs. Elliot*.

V. The Return of the Exile. — Vs.

19-22. 19. They came to Bethlehem:

the early home of Naomi, which she had left ten years before. Here, too, she had a small estate (Ruth 4: 3). **All the city was moved.** Bethlehem was a small



Pilgrims going to Bethlehem.

20. And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me.

21. I went out full, ¹ and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why ² then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?

22. So Naomi returned, and Ruth the Moabitess, her daughter in law, with her, which returned out of the country of Moab: and they came to Beth-lehem ³ in the beginning of barley harvest.

¹ Job 1: 21.

² Ex. 9: 31, 32.

Ruth 2: 23.

³ 2 Sam. 21: 9.

Rev. Ver.: *f omis then.*

town (Mic. 5: 2); and there were no news by the communications common occurrence. more than ten years band, we know, renders it natural sorrowful, spread pleasant
Hebrew



Stairway of a House at Bethlehem.

in such small villages, and especially in an age when papers, mails, etc., every event flew quickly abroad of friend to friend. Naomi's return was an un- The city, and especially the women, were thrown into Everybody ran, told the news, and wondered. For had passed since she had left Bethlehem. Her husband belonged to a prominent family in the city. All this that the news that Naomi had returned, poor and like wildfire, and created what to her was an unsensation. — *Lange*. And they said. *They* in the is feminine. *The women of Bethlehem said*. Is this Naomi? Can this be the Naomi who went away so happily ten years ago?

20. Call me not Naomi, "lovable," "pleasant." That name once belonged to me. Call me Mara, "bitter" (Ex. 15: 23), for this better expresses my condition. For the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. My life is in his hands. He has given me this bitter medicine for my soul. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord."

21. I went out full, i. e., rich, not in money and property, but in the possession of a husband and two sons; a rich mother, but now deprived of all that makes a mother's heart rich, — bereft of both husband and sons. — *Keil*. The Lord hath testified against me. Has borne witness against me, that our going away was a sin. The testimony he bore was in the sad results that followed their course. Hath afflicted me. The Jewish writers generally think that they did wrong in leaving their own country to go and live among idolaters. Observing that the law of the old covenant contained promises of unflinching subsistence to

those who trusted in God, it is held that it had been the more faithful part for them to have remained, trusting to the Lord for their sustentation. — *Kittó*. Still this may express her feeling, rather than the fact. All of us are so sinful that we know we deserve all God sends upon us. It is more than likely that at last, in heaven, if not before, Naomi realized that God's way was the best way, and could fall at his feet in gratitude for all that God had done.

22. Barley harvest. Usually in the middle of April. The fact of its being barley harvest suggested to Ruth that she might contribute something to their mutual subsistence by going forth to glean. This right of gleaning was one of the legal provisions for the poor of Israel; and as the land holders were not subject to money taxes for the support of the poor, this claim was liberally construed by them. The part of the field to which Ruth was providentially directed belonged to Boaz, a near kinsman of Naomi's late husband. — *Kittó*.

VI. The Reward of Devotion to Duty and to God. — The rest of the book of Ruth tells the story of her recompense for her self-denying love and giving up all to religion and to God. (1) She found a means of supporting her mother-in-law. (2) She won the respect and favor of the people among whom she lived. (3) She gained a most excellent husband and home. In Boaz we have a model for the character of a rich man in private

life: we see one whose deep faith in God breaks out in every word of his lips and every action of his life (2: 4, 11, 12; 3: 10, 11, etc.); one attentive to his own business and diligent in the care of his own property (2: 4; 3: 2); kind and friendly to his dependents, and beloved by them (2: 4); liberal, generous, and *Ruth's Later Life.* courteous to the poor and friendless stranger (2: 8, 9, 14, 15, 16; 3: 15); observing and appreciating virtue in others (2: 11, 12; 3: 11), and practising it himself under trying circumstances (3: 8-13); respecting the rights of others even when they interfered with his own wishes (3: 12, 13; 4: 4); observant of the laws of his country, though living in lawless times (4: 1-5, 9); mindful of his obligations to the living and the dead (2: 20; 4: 10); alive to the ties of kindred, of country, and of religion (4: 3; 2: 11, 12); and uniformly humble, quiet, and prudent in his conduct. — *Cook.* (4) Ruth had the honor of including among her descendants the great kings David and Solomon, and, above all, Jesus the Christ, through his mother.

Still, we are to be careful not to confound outward rewards with the real reward of virtue. As "Love in loving finds its joy," as the Savoyard singer, neglected and forgotten, declares that

"The song itself shall yet reward
The labors of the Savoyard,"

so virtue contains in itself, in the approval of God, in peace of conscience, in spiritual life and character, in helpfulness and service, its best reward. And yet the reward is not perfect without outward conditions to match the inward grace. So it shall be in heaven.

Virtue without success
Is a fair picture shown by an ill light. — *Dryden.*

Outward success is God's visible signature before the world of his approval of a good life. Note the ending of Job's life.

LESSONS FROM THE STORY OF RUTH.

1. The sure reward of filial devotion and trust in the Lord, and "the failure of all high reward to which selfishness leads."

2. The overruling providence of God in the private affairs of an humble family, as well as in the palace of princes, and the public events of nations. — *Schaff.*

3. The important evangelical lesson is as plainly taught in her case as in that of Cornelius, "that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him." — *Cook.*

4. "We may see in Ruth's entrance into the religion of Israel a picture of what was intended to be the effect of Israel's relation with the Gentile world. The household of Elimelech emigrated to Moab in a famine, and, whether that were right or wrong, they were there among heathens as Jehovah worshippers. They were meant to be missionaries, and, in Ruth's case, the purpose was fulfilled. She becomes the first-fruits of the Gentiles." — *Maclaren.*

5. "Every soul decides to turn back to the sinful world, as did Orpah, or to press on to know God, as did Ruth. Perhaps you are now deciding for eternity! Alas, if your decision is like Orpah's!"

6. REASONS for choosing God's people as our people and their God as our God. (1) Because their *God* is a glorious God, — excellent, mighty, holy, merciful, loving; (2) because their *people* are an excellent and happy people; (3) *happiness* is nowhere else to be had but in their God and with his people; (4) the example of Christians who have turned from the world should influence us; (5) our resolution should be fixed, because of the great difficulty of cleaving to God's people. Consider (1) that your soul is as precious as theirs; (2) unless you choose, there will be an eternal separation between you and them; (3) consider the encouragements to seek the blessings others have obtained; (4) they desire you to go with them; (5) consider what a doleful company will be left. — *President Edwards.*

7. When your friends are returning to God, it is a favorable time for you to accompany them, as Ruth accompanied Naomi.

8. A large part of the opposition to our serving the Lord, whether it arise from friends or enemies, will cease when it becomes manifest that we are invincibly determined on our course. It is against the young and undecided, — those who are in the process of forming their opinions, — that Satan and his emissaries wage their severest warfare. Those on the

borders between two armies suffer most from the war. Much opposition will cease when we openly avow our choice, and it has been shown that we are fixed and immovable in it.

9. A woman may be brave without being brazen. None have ever been braver than Ruth; yet she was delicate, affectionate, modest. "The gentleness of a true woman covers a courage of the patient, silent sort, which, in its meek steadfastness, is nobler than the contempt of personal danger, which is vulgarly called bravery. It is harder to endure than to strike. The supreme type of heroic, as of all, virtue is Jesus Christ, whose gentleness was the velvet glove on the iron hand of an inflexible will." — *Maclaren*.

10. God may suffer the righteous to fall into want and suffering for a time; but when he has tried them he will bring them forth as gold refined and burnished.

11. The reply of Ruth to Naomi has been spiritualized in sermons somewhat thus: (1) *Whither thou goest I will go*: It is blessed to go where God's people go, doing good in Christian activity, etc. (2) *Where thou lodgest, I will lodge*: The rest of the Christian, the rest of faith in the midst of his toil, and the rest of heaven after it are blessed. (3) *Thy people are my people*: The Christian's associations, in this world and in the world to come, the most delightful and honorable. (4) *Thy God my God*: The Christian's God, to those who choose him, an infinite blessing. (5) *Where thou diest, will I die*: The Christian's place of death, whether on the bed, the battle field, or the stormy ocean, a blessed place; for it is just by the gate of heaven. (6) *There will I be buried*: The Christian's place of burial, on land or sea, is blessed, for from this grave there shall be the resurrection of life.—Condensed from *Franklin Johnson, D. D.*

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Commentaries, the same as on Judges; *Ruth the Moabitess*, by Henry Moorhouse; *Ruth*, by Dr. Wm. M. Taylor; *Gleanings from the Book of Ruth*; Aubrey Price's *Six Lectures on Ruth*; Thomas Fuller on *Ruth*; George Lawson's *Lectures on Ruth*; Stephen Tyng's *The Rich Kinsman*; W. Braden's *Beautiful Gleaner*; Bishop Oxenden's *Story of Ruth*; Samuel Cox's *Book of Ruth*; Dr. Andrew Thomson's *Home Life in Ancient Palestine*; Charles H. H. Wright's *Book of Ruth in Hebrew*; Edward Topsell's *Reward of Religion*, or *Lectures upon the Book of Ruth*; Richard Bernard's *Ruth's Recompense*; *Sermon by President Edwards*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

See that the scholars read the whole book of Ruth. This is a good lesson for word pictures.

SUBJECT: LESSONS FROM THE STORY OF RUTH.

I. THE EMIGRANTS.

"I see not a step before me as I tread the days of the year,
But the past is still in God's keeping, the future his mercy shall clear;
And what looks dark in the distance may brighten as I draw near.

So I go on not knowing. I would not if I might;
I would rather walk in the dark with God than go alone in the light;
I would rather walk with him by faith than walk alone by sight."

II. THE CHOICE.

Illustration. Orpah and Ruth, starting together for the promised land, and one returning to idolatry, while the other goes on to immortal blessedness, is paralleled by the characters in the early part of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, where Christian and his neighbors start together for the Celestial City. Christian goes on, while Obstinate and Pliable soon return to the City of Destruction.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT. The young man's choice like Orpah's (Matt. 19: 16: 22); between what we must choose (Matt. 6: 33; Mark 10: 28-30); reasonableness of choosing God (Rom. 12: 1).

HYMN. "Almost persuaded."

Illustration. Dante has the approval of all brave men in assigning to that hell, where are those disdained alike of mercy and justice, Pope Celestine V.,

"Who made, through cowardice, the great refusal."

— *Bishop Warren*.

III. THE REWARD. Through doing her humble daily duties for the support of her mother and herself, Ruth found her reward in her character and her destiny.

Illustration. "In one of Murillo's pictures in the Louvre, he shows us the interior of a convent kitchen; but doing the work there are not mortals in old dresses, but beautiful, white-winged angels. One serenely puts the kettle on the fire to boil, and one is lifting up a pail of water with heavenly grace, and one is at the kitchen dresser reaching up for plates; and I believe there is a little cherub running about and getting in the way, trying to help. . . . All are so busy, and working with such a will, and so refining the work as they do it that somehow you forget that pans are pans, and pots are pots, and only think of the angels, and how very natural and beautiful kitchen work is,—just what the angels would do, of course." — *William C. Gannett*.

Illustration. "Our real and our ideal are not twins." My real is not my ideal. But one thing at least is in my power: if I cannot realize my ideal, I can at least *idealize my real*. If I am but a raindrop in a shower, I will be at least a perfect drop; if but a leaf in a whole June, I will at least be a perfect leaf. — *W. C. Gannett*.

LESSON IV.—OCTOBER 27.

THE CHILD SAMUEL.—I SAMUEL 3: 1-13.

Golden Text.—*Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth.*—I SAM. 3: 9.

THE SECTION includes the first six chapters of I Samuel.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.—1. The two books of Samuel, like the two books of Kings, originally formed an undivided whole. — *Cambridge Bible*. All four were called by Jerome *The Books of the Kings*.

2. *Their name.* The books are called books of Samuel because they record the life and ministry of the great prophet and judge. They are called books of Kings because they record the introduction of royalty among the Israelites. — *Johnson*.

3. *Their author.* It is generally agreed that the book is a *compilation* from different sources, including the writings of Samuel himself (I Sam. 10: 25), the book of Nathan the prophet, and the book of Gad the seer (I Chron. 29: 29; 2 Chron. 9: 29).

4. *The time of the history.* The time included in the history of these books cannot be exactly defined, from lack of any chronology in them. But it may be estimated roughly at 130 years; B.C. 1145-1015. — *Cook*.

TIME.—Samuel was born about 1146 B.C.; and the date of this lesson is therefore twelve years later, 1134 B.C. (The exact dates of this period are all of them somewhat uncertain.)

PLACE.—Shiloh, the religious capital of Israel, seventeen miles north of Jerusalem, and half way between Bethel and Shechem, nine or ten miles from each. — *Geikie*.

SAMUEL.—Twelve years old; **ELI**, about seventy-eight years old, high priest and judge.

CONTEMPORARY HISTORY.—In the opinion of many, Samson was born very nearly at the same time with Samuel, and his judgeship was contemporary with Samuel's, till about the time that Saul became a king, B.C. 1116-1096. The forty years' oppression of Israel by the Philistines began about the time of this lesson (Judg. 13: 1). Jesse, the father of David, was born about B.C. 1135, or when Samuel was eleven years old.

SECULAR HISTORY.—"During the period of the Judges, Egypt, in point of material glory, sat as a queen, with no one as yet to dispute her wonderful preëminence." "The capture of Troy by the Greeks, of which Homer sings, is said to have taken place about B.C. 1184" (*Blakie*), and Eneas to have landed in Italy, married Lavinia, the daughter of the king, and founded the city of Lavinium, B.C. 1182, a few years before Samuel was born. Ascanius, his son, built Alba Longa B.C. 1152. "Thus, while the house of Priam was approaching its downfall, through the lawlessness of Paris (in the abduction of Helen, a beautiful princess of Greece), that of Eli was hastening to its end through the profrigacy of Hophni and Phinehas; and the aged king of Troy may have breathed his last amid the blazing ruins of his capital at the time when Eli was prostrated by the loss of the ark, and when the great judge Samson, whom a woman had betrayed

and ruined, was performing his last achievement against the Philistines." — *Prof. W. G. Blaikie, I.L.D.*

PICTURES. — Samuel presented to Eli. — *Opie.* The voyage of life (childhood). — *Cole.*

PRONUNCIATIONS. — A'phēk; Ebēnē'zēr; E'li; El'kānāh, or Elkā'nāh; Hōph'ni; Phin'ēhās; Rā'māh; Rāmāthā'im; Shī'lōh.

EXPLANATORY.

I. Samuel.

NAME. Samuel means "Asked of God"; and he was so named because his birth was in answer to his mother's prayer.

PARENTAGE. He was a Levite. His father's name was Elkanah, and his mother's, Hannah. They were devotedly pious people, who attended the great religious festivals. Their story is beautifully told in I Samuel 1 and 2.

BIRTH. Samuel was born about B.C. 1146, at Ramah (*Hill*) (called also Ramathaim, "the double hill," or "the two Ramahs"), situated about four miles northwest of Jerusalem and thirteen miles south of Shiloh.

HOME. His earliest years were spent with his mother at Ramah. As soon as he was weaned (probably when two or three years old), he was taken to the tabernacle at Shiloh, and placed under the care of the high priest Eli, where he had a room connected with the tabernacle court. For a long time he had his official residence here at Shiloh, then the religious capital of Israel; but his own home was at Ramah, where he married and had two sons.

SKETCH OF HIS LIFE. Samuel was the assistant of the priest and judge, Eli, till his death in B.C. 1114, when Samuel was thirty-two years old. From that time for fifty-four years he was judge or prophet, either alone or in connection with the king, till his own death in 1060, at the age of eighty-six.

THE GREAT EPOCH. (1) Samuel was the fifteenth and last of the judges, thus closing that period of Israelitish history. (2) He was the first in the regular succession of *prophets*. (3) During his career began the period of the kings, "nothing short of the greatest revolution that took place in the story of Israel." "Samuel holds a place in the history of God's chosen people probably second only to that held by Moses, the creator of Israel and the founder of Israel's religion." — *Elmslie*.

II. The Making of a Man. — **FIRST.** His inheritance was good, as the child of many prayers, and of pious parents. It has been said that the education of a child should begin a hundred years before he is born. Both parents were religious and worthy.

SECOND. Samuel was reared in his early life in a religious home. He lived in an atmosphere of prayer. His parents went up to the religious meetings at Shiloh, and took him with them at a very early age. Such a home is a blessing to both parents and children. Like the quality of mercy "it is twice blessed; it blesteth him that gives, and him that takes." Next to heredity, the environment is of the utmost importance, and will often

overcome many of the disadvantages of inherited tendencies. The facts recorded concerning the children taken from the worst homes in the city and placed under favorable influences are full of encouragement and instruction. A true home — with pious parents, filled with love, deeply religious, cultured, with pure pleasures, with wise guidance and training, a center of usefulness — is the greatest safeguard against the perils of the young.

The Safeguard of Home.

THIRD. He was dedicated to God from his birth, and he knew it. He lived under the Nazarite's vow (Num. 6: 1-12; I Sam. 1: 11).

FOURTH. Next to his home he spent his youth in the temple service, with the good old high priest Eli. Even here his mother's love followed him, and by the clothes he wore he was ever reminded of his mother and his home.

FIFTH. The element of personal will and choice can never be left out of the account. Why, with the same inheritance and the same training, one person becomes



High Priest.
(With Mitre and Breastplate.)

good and another bad, one a Judas and another John, is beyond all philosophy to fathom.

SIXTH. Samuel was trained by resisting great temptations. His goodness was not untried innocence, but was the fruit of victory in many a battle with temptation to sin. The active sons of Eli were ever setting him a bad example. They were like older brothers, and their position gave them a powerful influence *Tempted, but True*. for evil over the young boy in their father's service. He saw them committing loathsome abominations, yielding to vice, growing rich by extortion; and we may be sure that they did not let him alone. But he was uncontaminated, for "the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord and also with men" (2: 26).

III. **The Aged High Priest and His Family.**—In order to understand the first duty which God called Samuel to perform, we must bring into our view the need of the times.

It was toward the close of the period of the judges, which had lasted nearly 270 years.

It was during the forty years' oppression by the Philistines in the time of Samson.

There was a central place of worship at Shiloh, whither the people came up to the great feasts.

There was no doubt a good deal of true religion as revealed in the story of Samuel's parents and the story of Ruth. But the conduct of Eli's sons and of Samson shows great looseness of morals pervading the nation.

Eli, born about B.C. 1212, was high priest at Shiloh, became judge when fifty-eight years old, acted as judge for forty years (1 Sam. 4: 18), and died at the age of ninety-eight (1 Sam. 4: 15). He had been judge twenty years when God called Samuel, and was therefore seventy-eight years old, which fact must be borne in mind in judging of his relation to the character of his sons. Eli had many good qualities. He was amiable and kind. "You cannot find one vulgar sin in the venerable high priest." "We find in Eli's treatment of Samuel not rivalry, but nobleness, magnanimity." "He was not self-obtrusive; he was no self-seeker." "Look at his interest in the ark of the Lord! Look at his submission to God!"—*From Parker's People's Bible*. Eli placed the honor of God and his kingdom beyond his own most precious interests, as is shown by his supreme care for the ark in the day of his calamity (1 Sam. 4: 13, 18). "The Bible holds him up as a great man of God."

At the same time, he had one grievous weakness which led him into great wrong to the nation and to his family. "When he got to be an old man, when his bodily strength was going, when his mental vigor and the energy of his will were sapped, then, under the terrible pressure of adverse circumstances," he failed in government. He allowed his sons, the prospective high priests, to continue in their wilful and public transgressions. They were "sons of Belial"; i.e., men of profligate disposition and conduct; men who had no regard for their own character, or for the honor of God, whose commissioned servants they were. The story of their crimes is told in 1 Samuel 2: 12-17, 29.

They were covetous, impious, licentious, using their holy office for selfish purposes, robbing the worshippers, profaning the sanctuary, and bringing true religion into contempt with the people. This course

they continued many years, in spite of the mild reproofs of their father and the warnings of God through Samuel and another man of God. They hardened their hearts against every good influence, till it would seem that Solomon's awful description in Proverbs 1: 24-32 was a life portrait drawn from their character and career.

It was plainly their father's duty to turn them out of office at any and every cost. It was a terribly hard duty, and Eli failed in it. And bitter was his punishment.

At the same time let us not be unjust to Eli. Professor Elmslie says that "Eli is one of the most unfortunate men in the Bible. We constantly hear him described as a weak, worthless father, a mere worldling, with no heart or soul in him." "I think, if he could bring an action for libel against preachers and commentators, he would get enormous damages." "Was his tuition so bad and defective that his sons turned out ill? Who was it that trained the child Samuel? The strong, powerful Samuel who crushed abuses and corruptions, drove out idolaters, and won battles for Israel?"—*Elmslie*.

GROWING BAD UNDER GOOD INFLUENCES. The sons of Eli grew bad in the service of God and under a pious father. Judas grew bad even under the teachings of Christ. God has given children a free will, and they must choose for themselves, and not depend on outward influences. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."

PARENTAL NEGLECT. "Weak, indulgent, and neglectful fathers sow ruin for their children and sorrow for themselves. Eli's public position may have had much to do with his failure in family discipline. Perhaps his public duties so engrossed his attention and

1. And ¹ the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And ² the word of the LORD was precious in those days; *there was* no open vision.

2. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli *was* laid down in his place, ³ and his ³ eyes began to wax dim, *that* he could not see;

3. ⁴ And ere ⁴ the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God *was*, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep*;

4. That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I.

5. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

¹ 1 Sam. 2: 11.

² Psal. 74: 9. Amos 8: 11. Rev. Ver.: *now* his eyes had begun to.

³ Gen 27: 1; 48: 10. 1 Sam. 4: 15.

⁴ Ex. 27: 21. Lev. 24: 3. 2 Chron. 13: 11.

⁵ and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was laid down to sleep, in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was.



Golden Candlestick.

energies that he neglected the proper training of his own children. Be this as it may, it is true to-day that many a man is so absorbed in public affairs, in the duties of his profession, or in the business of money-making, as to be almost a stranger to his own children."—*R. R. Meredith.*

IV. **Samuel Called of God.**—Vs. 1-10. 1. **And the child Samuel.** Josephus (*Antiq.* 5: 10, 4) says that Samuel was twelve years old. This was the age at which Jesus went up to the temple at Jerusalem (Luke 2: 42). **Ministered unto the Lord** (Jehovah): in such services as a child could perform, such as lighting the lamps (v. 3) and opening the doors of the tabernacle (v. 15).—*Johnson.*

He was also the personal attendant and aid to the aged and dim-sighted Eli, as is implied in his sleeping near him and his readiness to respond to his call. **And the word of the Lord was precious**, because it was rare. Not the written Word, but messages and communications from God. We read of only two prophets in the days of the Judges (Judg. 4: 4; 6: 8), and one other spoke to Eli (1 Sam. 2: 27). But the

people had the past revelations of God, their past history, and God's present providence. Every judge was a messenger from God. **There was no open vision.** Rather, *there was no vision published abroad.* There was no publicly acknowledged prophet, whose "word came to all Israel."—*Cambridge Bible.* God tried different ways of training his people.

2. **At that time**, when God was about to reveal himself to Samuel. The remaining words of verses 2 and 3 form a parenthesis, and describe the circumstances under which Samuel's call took place. (1) **Eli was laid down to sleep.** It was in the night. (2) **His eyes began to wax dim** from infirmity and age. Hence, when Samuel heard a voice calling him, he naturally thought his aged friend needed assistance. (3) **Ere the lamp . . . went out.** The golden candlestick with its seven lamps was to be trimmed and lighted every evening (Lev. 24: 2-4), and it continued to burn through the night.—*Prof. W. H. Green.* **Circumstances of the Call.** Hence the time was toward morning. (4) **In the temple**, the sacred tabernacle of Moses, with the buildings around the court. (5) **And Samuel was laid down to sleep**, in one of the rooms around the court, not in the tabernacle proper.

4. **That the Lord called Samuel.** By an audible voice, pronouncing his name. In the Septuagint version, the name is repeated twice; he "called Samuel, Samuel." **And he answered, Here am I.** The regular answer to one calling; literally, *Behold me.*—*Cook.*

5. **And he ran unto Eli.** Unacquainted with the visions of the Almighty, he took that to be only Eli's call which was really the call of God. Such mistakes we make oftener than we think.—*Henry.* In Samuel we observe a quick attention and unwearied diligence; he hears and runs at every call; he stays not to be twice called before he goes. He murmurs not, he argues not, he complains not, he delays not. It is to such a child as this our Lord requires us

God's Call.



Dagon.
(Layard.)

6. And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou ^adidst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.

7. Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.

8. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here *am* I; for thou ^ddidst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.

9. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel ^eanswered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.

11. And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, ¹ at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.

¹ 2 Kings 21: 12. Jer. 19: 3.

Rev. Ver.: *c* calledst.

d calledst.

e said.

to be like, for of such is the kingdom of God. — *Wogan*. He went and lay down. Thinking, probably, that he had been dreaming.

7. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord. He did not recognize his call, he did not know how God communicated his will to his prophets. This was his first experience, as is stated in the last part of the verse.

FAILURES TO RECOGNIZE GOD'S CALL. "The witness of the Spirit in the hearts of the faithful is often thus mistaken, by which means they lose the comfort of it; and the strivings of the Spirit with the consciences of sinners are likewise often mistaken, and so the benefit of their convictions is lost: *God speaketh once, yea, twice, but man perceiveth it not* (Job 33: 14)." — *Henry*.

8. The third time. God kept repeating his call. For he knew it was not from unwillingness to hear and obey that Samuel did not answer him, but from inexperience. Indeed, Samuel's prompt obedience to Eli's supposed call was the assurance that he would answer God's call whenever he recognized it. Obedience to parents and teachers is one proof of obedience to God. And Eli perceived that the Lord had called the child. Because there was no other explanation of the repeated calls.

10. And the Lord came, and stood. The Hebrew is emphatic; *presented himself*. In a vision, or in personal presence as the Angel of the Lord (comp. Gen. 18: 17, 20, 21, 33; Judg. 6: 14; Rev. 1: 1; 22: 16).

GOD CALLING THE YOUNG. God is calling every child as he called Samuel. It is an individual call, by name, for "he calleth his own sheep by name." God calls (1) by his Word; (2) by his own loving, attractive character; (3) by what he has done for us in Jesus Christ; (4) by the influences of the Holy Spirit; (5) by various providences; (6) by conscience; (7) by Sabbath and religious services; (8) by the invitations and influence of friends; (9) by the living water which satisfies every thirst of the soul; (10) by the attractions of goodness and of heaven; (11) by warning, and the fruit of a life of sin.

EARLY PIETY. Like Samuel, we should answer God's calls by, "Here am I." (1) It is easier to be a Christian in youth. (2) Then it gives us a much longer time in which to serve God. (3) We may not live to be old, and thus by putting off our duty we may fail altogether. (4) We escape many evils and dangers. No one can sow wild oats in youth, and not reap a harvest of evil. There are some spiritual blessings which can come only to those who have grown up in the Christian life.

V. The Hard Duty. — Vs. 11-13. 11. And the Lord said to Samuel. Through Samuel, whom Eli loved, God sent a terrible message, similar to one which he had previously sent by a holy man (1 Sam. 2: 27-36), but which did not have sufficient effect to enable Eli to compel his sons either to live a different life, or to leave the pure service of God. At which both the ears . . . shall tingle. With horror and alarm. As a loud, sharp, discordant note thrills one's ears with pain, so the bitter tidings of Israel's woe in the judgment about to fall on Eli's house would shock all Israel. — *Terry*.

12. In that day I will perform against Eli ¹all *things* ¹which I have spoken concerning his house: ²when I begin, I will also make an end.

13. For I have told him that I will ²judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he ³knoweth; because ³his sons ¹made themselves vile, and ⁴he restrained them not.

¹ Sam. 2: 30-36.

^{3 1} Sam. 2: 12, 17.

² Ezek. 7: 3; 18: 30

^{4 1} Sam. 2: 23-25.

Rev. Ver.: *f* all that I.

g from the beginning even unto

h knew.

the end.

i did bring a curse upon themselves, and.

12. All things which I have spoken. By the mouth of the man of God, as recorded in chapter 2: 27-36. When I begin, I will also make an end. I will perform thoroughly, I will go through with the performance from first to last. It was twenty years before God fulfilled his warning. Thus giving abundant time in which both Eli and his sons might change their course and avert their punishment. Like all God's warnings, these were the messages of infinite love; they were barriers in their downward course; they were angels of mercy entreating them to turn back.

13. I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity, etc. See above under Heading III. He restrained them not, and therefore he was in a measure responsible. He probably had not trained and disciplined his boys sufficiently when young. And now the wild and active young men were too strong and impetuous to be restrained by the infirm old man, without a faith and courage he did not then possess.

SAMUEL BEARS THE MESSAGE. It was a very hard thing for Samuel to make known to the aged Eli the message God had delivered to him. He was so young to seem to reprove one so old. He would have to give great pain to one who loved him and had done much for him. But Eli pressed and even abjured Samuel to tell him all, and Samuel "told him every whit."

VALUE OF HARD TASKS TO THE YOUNG. God often lays hard duties upon us at the very threshold of the new life. They are needful as a test, a revelation, and a defence; a test to God and man whether we really have given ourselves wholly to God; a revelation of our true condition to ourselves; and a defence against temptation. A French writer has said that a wise attack is the best defence. The same truth is expressed in the proverb about "carrying the war into Africa," derived from Scipio's defence of Rome against Hannibal by attacking Carthage. So now the best defence of the young against intemperance is to set them actively at work for temperance. The best defence against the temptations to any evil is to marshal them to an attack upon that evil. Hence God sets his children to work against evil; he gives them hard duties to perform, hard battles to fight. And this prepares them for their life's work.

VI. The Lost Battle and Its Consequences.—Chap. 4. Twenty years were given as space for repentance. But every effort to restrain these wicked sons of a good man proved unavailing. Then the doom came, sudden and irresistible.

The Philistines set themselves in battle array, and defeated the Israelites.

Then the people tried to regain their lost cause by resorting to the forms of religion without repentance and return in heart and life to God. They persuaded Eli's sons to bring the ark of God from Shiloh to the battle field at Ebenezer, near Aphek, at the pass of Beth-horon, twenty miles southwest of Shiloh. Brave and desperate as the Israelites were, they were defeated with great slaughter. God would not defend the symbols of religion when the spirit of religion had departed. (See Psa. 78: 56-64.) Hophni and Phinehas, in care of the ark, were slain in connection with the holy service they had defiled. The news came to Eli as he watched by the gate for news of the battle; and when he learned that the ark of God was in the possession of the enemy, and that his sons had perished, he fell backward from his seat and was killed by the fall.

Death of Eli and His Sons.

The Philistines took possession of the ark, but the Lord would not permit them to retain it. Their idol Dagon fell before it. The people were smitten with severe sickness wherever the ark was sent. Finally it was restored to Israel, but was never taken again to Shiloh.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Commentaries on Samuel, — *Expositor's Bible*; *Cambridge Bible*; *Pulpit Commentary*; the *People's Bible*, by Jos. Parker; *Commentaries* by Cook, Keil and Delitzsch, Ellicott, Lange. In *Expository Lectures* by Prof. W. G. Elmslie, "Samuel" is excellent. It is printed

also in the *Expositor* for August, 1892. Histories of the Israelites in the times of Samuel may be found in Professor Blaikie's *Manual of Bible History*; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, Vol. III.; Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Vol. I.; Milman's *History of the Jews*, Vol. I. The times of Samuel may be seen in various aspects in Sime's *Kingdom of All Israel*, and Orelli's *Old Testament Prophecy*. On this lesson see also Bushnell's *Christian Nurture*; S. H. Tyng's *Samuel, the Child of Prayer*; *Sermons* by Saurin, "Fatal Consequences of Bad Education"; by Payson, "Guilt and Consequences of Parental Unfaithfulness."

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. It is a great blessing to have children in the family. Much of the best training and moral culture of adults comes through the care and training of children.

2. It is a great blessing to be brought up in a religious home, and to be early taken to the house of God to listen to its teachings and join in its services. The home helps the church and the Sunday school, and they aid the home. "The star of Bethlehem for morality and religion stands over the home and the church."

3. Young children can enter upon the service of God by worship, by prayer, by obedience to parents, by helpfulness at home, by kindness to others, by studying the Bible.

4. The smaller and less important services for God are preparations for larger service. He that is faithful in that which is least is preparing for greater responsibilities and the wider kingdom.

5. "Few parts of early education are so important as to learn to keep the body in subjection. To resist bodily cravings, whether greater or smaller, which unfit one for duty; temptations to drink, or smoke, or dawdle, or lie in bed, or waste time when one ought to be up and doing; to be always ready for one's work, punctual, methodical, purpose-like, save only when sickness intervenes,—denotes a very admirable discipline for a young person, and is a sure token of success in life." — *Blaikie*. As the little girl reported the text, "Keep the soul on top."

6. From obedience and submission spring all other virtues, as all sin does from self-opinion. — *Montaigne*. "The kindest thing we can do is to declare God's doom on sin, and to assure men that any hopes they may cherish of his relenting to do as he has said are vain hopes."

7. The sins and failures in good men are temporal, and contrary to the tendency and nature of their souls; therefore their punishment is temporal. The sins of bad men express the nature of their hearts as alienated from God; their punishment is eternal. (See Luke 16: 25.)

8. "God's mills grind slow, but they grind exceeding fine"; and they grind slow in order to give men an opportunity of repentance. Eli and his sons had at least twenty years' warning. "A Jewish proverb says, Michael flies with but one wing, Gabriel with two. God is quick in sending angels of peace, and they fly apace; but the messengers of wrath come slowly." — *J. Taylor*.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

SUBJECT: THE MAKING OF A GOOD MAN.

I. THE EARLY HOME TRAINING.

Illustration. One hundred and twenty clergymen were together, and they were telling their experience and their ancestry, and of the one hundred and twenty clergymen one hundred assigned as the means of their conversion the influence of a Christian mother. — *Talmage in Marriage Ring*.

Illustration. During seventeen years I kept an accurate record concerning those who united with the church under my ministry. Leaving out eleven whose record is unknown, of the remaining 374 one or both parents of 327 were religious, and forty-seven had neither parents pious; seven to one.

Illustration. Governor Rice says that seven eighths of the prisoners in the State Prison of Massachusetts are under twenty-one years of age, and they are not chiefly fallen good men, but those who have never had good home training.

Illustration. The power of devoting our children in their earliest years to the service of God is well illustrated by the story told by Merivale, in his *History of Rome*, of the famous Carthaginian general, Hannibal. When he was nine years of age, his father, Hamilcar, proposed to take him on one of his military expeditions, which offer the young

Hannibal eagerly accepted. His father then bade him to devote himself once for all to the service of his country,—Carthage,—and with his hand upon the altar to swear eternal enmity to Rome. This dedication in youth determined the course of his whole life.

II. IN THE HOUSE OF GOD, enveloped in an atmosphere of religion.

Illustrations. Malaria from living in a malarious atmosphere. Hawthorne's story of Rappacini's daughter, in *Mosses from an Old Manse*. Teaching birds to sing a beautiful song by allowing them to hear only that song.

III. THE CALL OF GOD. A special call. All influences in vain unless there is a choice of God and good.

IV. A HARD DUTY. A training for harder and larger duties. The warning was a kindness, as the fire bell is rung, not to create a fire, but to help put it out.

V. A CONTRAST in Eli's sons; bad men under good influences. Partly a result of mistaken kindness.

Illustration. Good men are imperfect. They are like John-Jack in the story by Lynde Palmer, or like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde.

Illustration.

"You may grind them both in the self-same mill,
You may bind them, heart and brow;
But the poet will follow the rainbow still,
And the other will follow the plow."

LESSON V. — NOVEMBER 3.

SAMUEL THE JUDGE. — I SAMUEL 7: 5-15.

Golden Text. — *Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.* — I SAM. 7: 12.

THE SECTION includes chapters 7 and 12, the beginning of Samuel's judgeship, and his farewell address after his place had been taken by the choice of a king.

TIME. — Samuel's judgeship extended from the death of Eli, B.C. 1114, forty years to the inauguration of Saul as king in 1075 (or twenty years from B.C. 1114 to 1095.) The chronology is somewhat uncertain.

PLACE. — (1) Samuel's home as judge was at Ramah, four miles northwest of Jerusalem. (2) The assembly of the people was at Mizpeh, "the watch tower," three and one half miles northwest of Jerusalem. It is the highest hill in the vicinity, and "from its summit central Palestine is spread out like an embossed map." — *Murray's Handbook*. (3) The great battle was fought at Ebenezer, not far distant.

SAMUEL. — Now about 52 years old, with his home in Ramah (I Sam. 7: 15-17); recognized as a prophet throughout Israel (I Sam. 3: 20). He had been judge of Israel since the death of Eli, twenty years before, making circuits to several places for the purpose of administering justice (7: 16).

SAMSON was a judge further to the southwest during most of these twenty years, dying in the ruins of the Philistine temple at Gaza about two years before the time of this lesson.

PICTURES. — Samuel presented to Eli. — *Opif.* Samuel anointing Saul. — *Dord.*

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Abin'ādāb; Ash'tārōth; Astār'tē; Bā'ālim; Elēā'zēr; Ebēnē'zēr; Kir'jāth-jē'ārim; Mīz'pēh; Pāl'ēstine; Philis'tines; Rā'māh.

EXPLANATORY.

I. **The Circumstances.** (1) The central place of worship was in an unsettled condition. After the battle described in our last lesson, when the ark was captured by the Philistines, Shiloh was neglected, either because it was laid waste, or because God had forsaken it on account of the corruption of the priesthood there.

THE TABERNACLE was removed and taken to Nob, near Mizpeh, where we find it in David's time (I Sam. 21: 1); thence possibly to Gilboa (chap. 28: 4-6); afterwards to Gibeon (I Chron. 16: 39). It must have become very old and almost valueless in the three or four centuries since it was first erected.

THE ARK. After seven months' captivity among the Philistines, the ark was sent back by them, and was placed in the house of Abinadab, at Kirjath-jearim, where it remained

for fifty years, till it was taken by David to Mount Zion. It is difficult to say why the ark was not taken to Shiloh, unless Shiloh was destroyed. It was taken to Kirjath-jearim, probably because it was the first large city its bearers came to from the Philistines at Bethshemesh, toward Shiloh, its former home.

There was no "seat of national worship at Kirjath-jearim. There is no word of sacrificial or other services being performed there. There is nothing to indicate that the annual feasts were held at this place. The ark had a resting-place there — nothing more." — *Blaikie*. (2) *The long oppression*. The Philistine oppression, beginning twenty years before the loss of the ark, continued the whole twenty years referred to in verse 2. The oppression was forty years, B. C. 1134-1094 (Judg. 13: 1). The Lord was making the people sick of sin and idolatry. They were eating the fruits of their own doings, and they were as bitter as apples of Sodom, and as unsatisfying.

II. Samuel the Reformer. After the death of Eli, Samuel, then about thirty-two years old, seems to have practically taken his place, but rather as a prophet than a priest. Before Samuel, the prophets had been known as "seers" (those who see); but from his time the name of Nabi (*speaker*) was given as a title of honor. It comes from a root, "to boil up," "to boil forth," like a fountain, and thus hints at the prophet as one who utters his words under the irrepressible influence of a divine communication. He is "moved" or inspired "by the Holy Ghost," a phrase which in itself implies the same irresistible impulse to speak what was thus communicated to him; for the very word ghost — *geist* — is the same as the heaving, fermenting *yeast*, or the boiling, steaming *geyser*. — *Geikie*.

Meaning of Prophet.

"Samuel united in a remarkable degree the opposite qualities of destroyer of the old and founder of the new. He was the Luther and the Alfred the Great, the John the Baptist and the Paul of his age. He was both reformer and mediator, as he stood between the old and the new of a nation's history." — *Stanley*.

We wonder why Samuel waited twenty years before he summoned the people to repentance; but he probably was doing it all the time as he had opportunity. Yet there could be no public assemblies for this purpose till the people were ready to return to the Lord and throw off the yoke of the oppressor. **Samuel's Labors.**

Political independence and moral reformation must go hand in hand. "Probably the life of the young prophet-judge was that of a fugitive, going stealthily from place to place, that he might teach and preach, hiding in the caverns in the limestone ranges of Judæa, emerging thence to visit now one quarter of the country, and now another, ever in danger, but gradually stirring up, not merely those districts which were contiguous to the Philistines, but all Israel to a sense of the greatness of their sins, and to the necessity of renewed trust in and return of old love to their God. And so a fresh spiritual life by degrees sprang up among the people." — *R. Payne Smith*. "Everywhere Samuel, Nazarite and prophet, led a crusade against heathen worship, against sensual practices, against idolatry; everywhere he fanned a great fire of absolute religious enthusiasm in the people. Inside the mass of apathetic, worldly minded men he had established great and powerful classes of men devoted to religion, to patriotism, to God, — the Nazarites and the schools of the prophets; men of ecstatic fervor, an inspired brotherhood, with a wild zeal like that which animated the monks of the early Christian ages." — *Elmslie*. Samuel's character, as described in his farewell address (chap. 12), pure, unselfish, patriotic, must have been a power for good.

The Crusade.

III. Steps toward Reformation. — Vs. 5, 6.

FIRST. THE PEOPLE LAMENTED after the Lord (v. 2). With the ark on the borders of the kingdom in a private house, and the tabernacle neglected, and scarcely a visible sign of religion or of God, the hearts of the people became hungry for God's presence and power among them, for the great feasts, and for some word from their God. They were suffering from a spiritual famine. Many of the people had gone into idolatry; and the effect was seen on the morals and happiness of the nation. They remembered in their poverty and oppression the happy and prosperous times in the past under the service of God.

SECOND. THEY PUT AWAY THEIR IDOLS, and ceased their idol worship (vs. 3, 4). For the Israelites to forsake their sins required no little self-denial and strength of character, as does the forsaking of sin in our day. "Some are inclined to fancy that it was a mere senseless and ridiculous obstinacy that drew the Israelites so much to the worship of the idolatrous gods of their neighbors." But to put away idols was to revolt against those who held authority over them. They must resist the attraction of wealth, fashion, and power; they must give up the heathen festivals, with their amusements and free and easy revelries, and go back to "plain living and high thinking." "Between Hebrew and

5. And Samuel said, ¹ Gather all Israel to ^a Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD.

6. And they gathered together to ^a Mizpeh, and ² drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD, and ³ fasted on that day, and said there, ⁴ We have sinned against the LORD. And Samuel judged the children of Israel in ^a Mizpeh.

¹ Judg. 20: 1. ² Kings 25: 23.
² 2 Sam. 14: 14.

³ Neh. 9: 1, 2. Dan. 9: 3, 4, 5. Joel 2: 12.
⁴ Judg. 10: 10. 1 Kings 8: 47. Psal. 106: 6.

Rev. Ver.: ^a Mizpah.

heathen worship, there was something of the contrast that you find between the severe simplicity of a Puritan meeting and the gorgeous and fashionable splendor of a great Romish ceremonial."—*Blaikie*.

THIRD. They were to "PREPARE THEIR HEARTS unto the Lord" (v. 3). There must be heart-searchings, new consecration, a new choice of God. There must be a change of heart, not merely a movement of the surface feelings.

FOURTH. PUBLIC RELIGIOUS SERVICES.—V. 5. **Gather all Israel to Mizpeh.** A hill near Samuel's home at Ramah. There must be a unification of the nation by religious worship. They are one in the Lord. This is the only power that can make them one, a great enthusiasm that touches the conscience and the religious nature. "United we stand; divided we fall." "Many as the waves, but one as the sea." There is power in a public assembly. It creates a tide wave of feeling and action. It has a rousing and warming influence. Scattered embers can never burn like a concentrated fire. "It is very evident that the object of calling all the people to Mizpeh was that the religious act performed there might serve as a consecration for battle, to put the people into the right relation with their God, and thus to prepare a way for their deliverance out of the bondage of the Philistines."—*Keil*. Such a consecration is the necessary preparation for every effort for overcoming the evils in the world. The battle with sin is of the Lord, and no armies, no weapons, no plan of campaign can be successful without his presence and power in repentant and consecrated hearts.

FIFTH. PRAYER. **And I will pray for you.** For he believed that all their help must come from God. He would open the channels for the divine blessing. (1) It is a great privilege to pray for others. (2) It is the prayer of the righteous man that "availeth much." (3) Praying for others and working for them go together. (4) He can pray best for others who lives in the spirit of prayer and communion with God. (5) Intercessory prayer is Christlike. "He ever liveth to make intercession for us." (6) *Examples*: Abraham (Gen. 18: 22-33); Elijah (1 Kings 18: 36, 42); Ezra (Ezra 9: 5-15).

*Intercessory
Prayer.*

SIXTH. A SYMBOLICAL CEREMONY. 6. **Drew water and poured it out before the Lord, i. e., upon the ground.** A symbolical ceremony signifying (1) the binding, irrevocable nature of their vows and promises. They were "as water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again."—*Keil*. (2) It was "a symbol of pouring out before God confessions of sin drawn from the depths of the heart." (3) It was a symbol of pouring out their sins; that they thoroughly renounced idolatry, that nothing of it should remain, as when water is poured out of a cask there remains no smell as there does when other liquors are poured out.—*Dr. Gill*.

SEVENTH. FASTING. **And fasted on that day.** Fasting would seem to have its basis in (1) a grief over sin so deep and intense that all desire for food is taken away; (2) in the aid to devotion furnished by a body unburdened with food, so as to leave the mind and heart in their most active and free condition. (3) It is the natural expression of deep sorrow for sin. It is not enough for the heart to feel deeply; it needs to express its feelings.

EIGHTH. CONFESSION. **And said there, We have sinned against the Lord.** (1) Recognized the fact that the cause of their troubles lay in their sins. (2) Recognized the fact that God was not to blame for their troubles. He had kept his part of the covenant. Indeed, their very sufferings were the assurance of God's faithfulness to his word, for he had declared that these things should come upon them if they disobeyed. (3) Confession is natural to a truly penitent heart. It must confess. It must utter its feelings to him against whom sin has been committed, as a necessary condition of peace in the assurance of forgiveness. **And Samuel judged the children of Israel.** He was publicly recognized not only as a prophet, but as the civil and military leader of Israel. So that,

7. And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to ^a Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard *it*, they were afraid of the Philistines.

8. And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease ¹ not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.

9. And Samuel took a suckling lamb, and offered *it* for a ^b burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and ² Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD ^c heard him.

10. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: ³ but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were ^d smitten before Israel.

11. And the men of Israel went out of ^a Mizpeh, and pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until *they came* under Beth-car.

¹ Isa. 37: 4. ² Psa. 99: 6. Jer. 15: 1. ³ Josh. 10: 10. Judg. 4: 15; 5: 20. 2 Sam. 22: 14, 15. Rev. Ver.: ^b whole burnt offering unto. ^c answered. ^d smitten down.

like Barak, and Gideon, and Jephthah, he organized and marshalled the people, and led them out to victory.

IV. Deliverance.—Vs. 7-14. 7. The Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together. The lords naturally regarded a national assembly of their vassals as a preliminary step toward revolt.—*Cambridge Bible*. And they were right, even if they thought it merely a religious assembly; for when the hearts of the people were filled with faith in God, and consecration to him, their souls would also fill with courage and patriotism. They could not long remain slaves. So the old English baron said when he saw his enemies at prayer, "Up and at them. They have begun the battle." **The lords of the Philistines.** This implied a united invasion of the five great dukedoms of Gaza, Askelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath (6: 16, 17). **Went up against Israel.** They would nip the rebellion in the bud. They would take the Israelites unawares while engaged in religious services and unprepared for war. **The children of Israel . . . were afraid.** They were probably poorly armed. They had not come prepared for war. They were unorganized, with a new and untried leader.

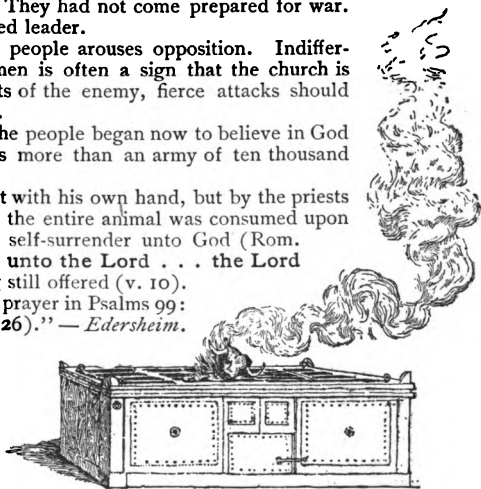
NOTE. That activity on the part of God's people arouses opposition. Indifference on the part of the world and of wicked men is often a sign that the church is not doing its duty. Opposition, the fiery darts of the enemy, fierce attacks should give us comfort, rather than make us despair.

8. **Cease not to cry unto the Lord.** The people began now to believe in God and in prayer. "I fear John Knox's prayers more than an army of ten thousand men."—*Mary, Queen of Scots*.

9. **Offered it for a burnt offering.** Not with his own hand, but by the priests under his direction. "In the burnt offering, the entire animal was consumed upon the altar. It was significant of a complete self-surrender unto God (Rom. 12: 1)."—*Professor Green*. **Samuel cried unto the Lord . . . the Lord heard him.** "Even while his prayer is being still offered (v. 10). Hence he is presented as the ideal of a man of prayer in Psalms 99: 6, and Jeremiah 15: 1 (comp. also Deut. 9: 26)."—*Edersheim*.

10. **The Lord thundered.** Thus the deliverance was plainly from God, in answer to prayer; and thus it showed his approval of the new religious feelings, his readiness to forgive, his public recognition of Samuel as judge. **And discomfited them.** The Hebrew expresses the confusion of a sudden panic.—*Cambridge Bible*.

11. **Until they came under Beth-car.** Beth-car was apparently on high ground



Altar for Burnt Offerings.

12. Then Samuel ¹ took a stone, and set it between * Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.

13. So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more * into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel.

14. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and ² the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites.

15. And Samuel ³ judged Israel all the days of his life.

¹ Gen. 28: 18; 31: 45; 35: 14.
Josh. 4: 9; 24: 26.

² 1 Sam. 12: 11. Judg. 2: 16.

Rev. Ver.: ^e within the border.
f the border.

overhanging the road back to Philistia. The exact site is unknown, but it was close to Ebenezer.

12. Between Mizpeh (*watch-tower*) and Shen (*tooth or sharp rock*). The exact spot is unknown. Ebenezer (*the stone of help*). It is a memorable fact, which gave a touching emphasis to this memorial, that this was the very place where, twenty years before, the Israelites were defeated and the ark of God taken. The stone of help thus became a twofold monument. — *Kittó*.

EBENEZERS. Through successive generations the church of God has had occasion to set up *Eben-ezers* for renewed deliverances; for neither outward persecutions nor inward corruptions have yet prevailed against her, because hitherto the Lord hath helped her. We may hope ere long to set up our last Eben-ezer in the realms above, and begin our eternal songs of joyful praise to him who hath helped us quite through, and made us more than conquerors. — *Scott*.

"Here I'll raise my Ebenezer,
Hither by thy help I'm come;

And I hope by thy good pleasure,
Safely to arrive at home."

13. So the Philistines were subdued. It was not a mere temporary victory, but the beginning of a new era of religion and of prosperity, growth, and power. They were on the eve of the most prosperous times the nation ever knew.

14. The cities . . . taken from Israel were restored. This shows the vigor and success of Samuel's government. — *Cook*. There was peace, not only with the Philistines, but also with the Amorites, the most powerful of the Canaanite tribes.

V. The Judgeship of Samuel. — V. 15. And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life, as civil and military ruler till Saul was made king, and after that as a civil and religious judge and reformer. When Saul became king, Samuel, formally and publicly, laid down his office of judge, just as Washington laid down his rank of commander-in-chief of our armies. And the twelfth chapter is called Samuel's farewell address, not because it was given near the close of his life, but because, like Washington's farewell address to the army, it marks the close of one phase of his public career. But as Washington afterwards entered public life as president, and was to the end of his days a man of weight and influence in the councils of the nation, so Samuel continued in public life as priest and prophet of God.

A NOBLE LIFE. (1) Samuel called the people to witness and they testified to his generous, unselfish, patriotic, and holy life. His nobility was shown in yielding up his office, and aiding the people to obtain a king. He was

"A tower of strength,
Which stood four square to all the winds that blew."

(2) Samuel did not live his noble and upright life by being sheltered from temptation and preserved from difficulty and danger; but he was assailed by the same temptations which overthrew his own sons and the sons of Eli. He stood firm, and grew stronger and better in the blasts before which so many mighty men have fallen. (3) The source of his strength and his goodness was in his religious life. He lived near to God in sweet communion. He worshipped in the temple. He went to God in prayer. He was obedient to his will. (4) His character was a source of comfort and blessing to himself. He could

respect himself. A man once said of his past career, "With half the time and energy I have spent, I might have been a man of property and character, but I am a homeless wretch; twice I have been in State prison, I have made acquaintance with all sorts of miseries, but *my worst punishment is in being what I am.*" So, on the other hand, the best reward of the righteous is in being righteous. The joy of an angel is not in his robes of light, his palace in the skies, his golden harp, his great knowledge, but in being an angel. (5) Samuel's life was an example and inspiration to the whole nation, tending to elevate the character of the people, to inspire the young to noble living, to be a power for good so long as the world endures. (6) His one failure or misfortune was that his sons were not good men, and were utterly unworthy to succeed their father.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Prof. Elmslie's *Expository Lectures*, "Samuel"; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*, Vol. III., pp. 40-92; Stanley's *Jewish Church*, Lectures 18, 19, 20; *Samuel and the Prophetic Order and Teaching*; Edersheim's *Prophecy and History in Relation to the Messiah*, pp. 232-249, a picture of the times; Delitzsch's *Old Testament History of Redemption*, pp. 75-83, etc. Also introduction to *Cambridge Bible for Schools*, on 1 Samuel; Wm. M. Taylor's *David*, pp. 153, 154, on Samuel's reforms.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF SAMUEL.

1. God lets us eat the fruits of our sins to make our hearts hungry for him.

"Some would do little for God if the devil were dead."

2. God is ready and anxious to deliver us from our troubles just as soon as we are in the condition where it is wise and safe.

3. Long years of hard labor in teaching, inspiring, arousing men are the necessary preparation for a great reformation and revival. There is no harvest without sowing and cultivating. Long delays should not discourage us.

4. The conditions of God's returning favor are sorrow for past sin, confession, forsaking sin, earnest prayer, a longing after God.

5. There is great value in large assemblies for religious services.

6. A revival in our own souls is the best preparation for victory over the world.

7. The victory is due to the power of God, but we must do our part as faithfully as if all depended upon ourselves.

8. To those who put their trust in God, the places of former defeat will become places of victory; the valleys of Achor shall become doors of hope.

9. We should have memorials of what God has done for us, ever expressing our gratitude to him and keeping it fresh in our memories. Thanksgiving is an essential part of true worship.

10. Sincere service of God makes us true to man.

11. Much of one's best work is through others, often unseen and unrecognized, like the foundations of a lighthouse under water.

12. A noble character, usefulness, a pure life, truth, justice are the true tests of success.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

The whole life of Samuel comes within the limits of our study to-day.

- I. THE NEED. The idolatrous tendencies and the long oppression.

- II. THE PREPARATION (vs. 5, 6).

Illustration. Repentance and forsaking of sin are necessary before God can give the blessings of salvation and the fruits of the Spirit; as the warm spring sun must come and thaw the ground and melt the snows before the flowers and fruits can bless the earth. It is useless to sow even the best of seed on snow banks and frozen soil.

- II. THE DELIVERANCE (vs. 7-14).

Illustration.—"In the early days of stereoscopic pictures, an ingenious artist showed the writer a very puzzling picture. Instead of mounting two pictures of himself together or two of his wife, on one side he put a photograph of himself, on the other side one of her. When this odd combination was looked at through a stereoscopic glass, it was a puzzle

picture, indeed. At one instant it seemed like a man wearing a figured silk coat. At the same instant it was a woman in a broadcloth dress. The two pictures combined in one, as this glass must combine them, made the faces and figures an indescribable mixture." — *George May Powell*. So, often, life is a puzzle picture. We are confused by the intermingling of the divine and the human, but both are always there. There is a toy in which two pictures are combined into one better one, as a horse on one side and a man on the other are made to appear, by swift turning, to be simply a man on horseback. So the divine and the human elements are combined into one blessed life.

IV. A NOBLE LIFE (v. 15). Samuel's career and character.

Illustration. William Wickham, being appointed by King Edward to build a stately church, wrote in the window, "This work made William Wickham." When charged by the king for assuming the honor of that work to himself as the author, whereas he was only the overseer, he answered that he meant not that he made the work, but that the work made him, having before been very poor, and then in great credit.

Illustration. We are apt to see too exclusively the dark side of the picture of these times. "An artist, when on his deathbed, called for his masterpiece. It was the painting of a shipwreck, with dark clouds and raging seas, the only light a lurid one. 'That cloud is too dark,' he said; 'I always thought it the right shade before, but now I see it is too dark; I must make it brighter,' and with a last touch of his brush he let a gleam of light illumine the darkness." — *Tools for Teachers*. Samuel made the picture of the times lighter.

Illustration. The finest epitaph ever carved upon a stone was a little girl's: "Her companions said, 'It was easier to be good when she was with us.'"

"Life's race well run;
Life's work well done;
Life's crown well won;
Now comes rest."

LESSON VI. — NOVEMBER 10.

SAUL CHOSEN KING. — I SAMUEL 10: 17-27.

Golden Text. — *The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice.* — PSA. 97: 1.

THE SECTION includes chapters 8 to 12, the whole story of the beginning of the new era of government, and the beginning of Saul's reign.

TIME. — 1095 or 1075, twenty years after the battle of Ebenezer in our last lesson. We must remember that the chronology is uncertain, and the judgeship of Samuel and the early part of Saul's reign may have overlapped.

PLACE. — (1) The great assembly described in the last lesson was at Mizpeh, a hill near Ramah. (2) Samuel's home was at Ramah, four or five miles northwest of Jerusalem. (3) The place where Saul met Samuel first was in the district of Zuph, not far from the tomb of Rachel, which is a mile north of Bethlehem.

SAMUEL. — About seventy years old, his active judgeship, but not his influence as a prophet and a man of God, being near its end.

DAVID. — A boy of ten or twelve years, living in Bethlehem.

PRONUNCIATIONS. — Abi'ah; Bē'zēk; Gīl'gāl; Jā'bēsh-Gīl'ēād; Kīsh; Mā'trī; Mīz'pēh; Nā'hāsh; Zūph.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Israelites Desire a King. — Chapter 8: 1-5. We are now on the verge of a new era of government, a new development of the chosen people. When Samuel was about seventy years old, the leaders of Israel, who formed "the popular assembly which seems in all times to have existed in Israel" (*Ellicott*), came to Samuel and asked that he would change the government to a kingdom, and aid them in finding a king.

The New Era.

REASONS FOR DESIRING A KING. 1. Samuel was growing old, and could not well lead their armies against the well-organized enemies around them. They wanted some one of activity, and endurance, and modern military skill, in whose military leadership they could trust. Samuel trusted more in God than in armies.

2. There was no one to take his place. Samuel had appointed his two sons as judges at Beersheba, on the border of the nation. But they were bad men, who, when they went away from home, disgraced their father by dishonest proceedings. It would not do for these men to usurp their father's place. They had more experience in taking bribes than in leading armies. Moreover, such leaders would ruin the country morally and turn away the favor of God.

3. The commonwealth was breaking up into fragments (*James-Sime*). And they wanted a leader, a court for "the national administration of affairs, as the center and organ of the religious and political life of the people. An hereditary monarchy seemed the only means of combining the tribes into one nation, putting an end to their mutual jealousies, and subordinating tribal to national interests." — *Edersheim*.

4. There was also a cloud gathering beyond Jordan, which threatened to sweep the Hebrews from the land their fathers conquered. All saw it coming. That cloud was a horde of Eastern plunderers, led by Nahash, king of Ammon (11: 1-3; 12: 12). — *James Sime*. Another cloud in the southwest was the formidable league of the Philistine chieftains (9: 16). Therefore they wanted a military leader, one "to go out before them and fight their battles" (8: 20; 12: 12). "The national militia, untrained and undisciplined, might be sufficient to repel the tumultuary invasions of the wandering tribes; but they had now to resist powerful monarchies which could bring into the field an overwhelming power of chariots and cavalry." — *Milman*.

5. All the nations around them had their kings and courts. These seemed to make them strong and great. The mightiest and most victorious nations had kings; and this central power seemed to be the source of their greatness. There are still existing those who have this feeling, both in church and state. But "the Eastern mind is so essentially and pervadingly regal that to be without a sovereign is scarcely an intelligible state of things to an Oriental; and they must have had occasion to feel the absence of a king gave them an appearance of inferiority in the eyes of their neighbors." We have read in Harris' *Collection of Travels* that when the English and Dutch were competing for power and influence in the East, the English, in order to damage their rivals, industriously circulated the dangerous secret that the Dutch had no king. *English King and the Dutch Republic*. The Oriental mind was astonished and perplexed by the indication of a condition so utterly beyond the scope of its experience and comprehension, and the Dutch, alarmed for the effect of this slur upon their respectability, stoutly repelled the charge as an infamous calumny, affirming that they had a very great king, thus exalting for the nonce their stadtholder to that high rank. — *Kitto*.

The Israelites were in reality better off than the other nations, but, as is very common, they overestimated their own troubles, and they underestimated the troubles of their neighbors. To a certain class of minds, "distance lends enchantment to the view," and other places, other times, other circumstances are better than their own.

6. It is quite probable that they half-consciously wanted a king because they were tired of having their prosperity depend on their good behavior. The leaders God chose for them could succeed only when the people turned to God. But a king might conquer by his skill and organizing power, and they imagined that they need not be so particular as to their duties toward God.

II. Samuel and the New Era. — 8: 6-22. This proposal was a great trial to Samuel, and sent him to God in earnest prayer to know what he should do.

1. This request seemed charged with ingratitude towards their aged leader, who had spent a whole lifetime in unselfish devotion to their interests. He had taught them; he had provided schools of the prophets for their education; he had led them back to God from idolatry; he had won victory for them over their enemies; he had brought them to large prosperity; he had never failed them in their hour of need; and now they were dissatisfied and wanted him to step out, and give place to some unknown man.

"How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
To have a thankless child!"

"Ingratitude, more strong than traitors' arms,
Quite vanquished him; then burst his mighty heart."

It is hard to be laid aside, to lay down the precious work still unfinished and let another neglect what has been done, and take up a different and inferior mode of procedure.

2. Their request was a rejection of God as their king. He had given them victory after victory, always victory and prosperity when they had obeyed him so that he could bestow these blessings, and now they could not trust him. It was a rejection of God's high plans for them, the best possible. It was a rejection of his conditions of prosperity. They laid to God's charge the misfortunes due to their own conduct. "They ought to have deemed

it a high privilege to be *unlike* other nations, in that they had been separated from all other people, and chosen out of other nations to be a peculiar treasure to God above all people, a holy nation, a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19: 5, 6), 'a special people unto the Lord their God, above all people that are upon the face of the earth' (Deut. 7: 6). Like a national Esau, they profanely bartered their birthright for what they deemed a temporal benefit." — *Watson*.

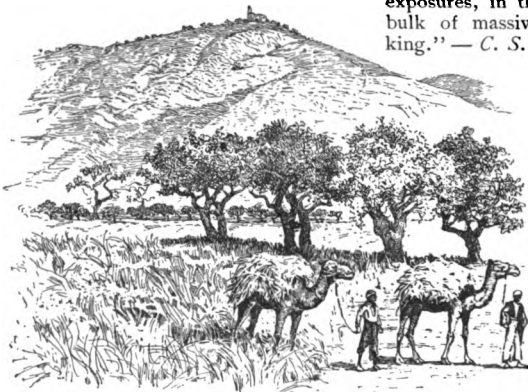
3. Hence it was a disappointment to Samuel that the people refused the splendid possibilities before them, which he had labored all his life to realize. And they chose only *the second best*. Since they would not have the best, God allowed them to have next best, and made the most possible for them out of that **The Second Best**. choice. So God is doing continually with his children. They so often refuse their highest privileges, and take the second best, or third best, instead of the best. And then all that God can do for them is to enable them to make the very most out of what they choose.

Samuel showed the people the evils they would suffer from their course. When these did not deter them, he yielded, and decided to see that they had a king. "I think that one of the most magnanimous, and majestic, and heroic deeds ever done in our world's story was done by Samuel, when, convinced that **Moral Heroism** it was the will of God, he set himself to do what no other man could do: to forsake all his past, to abandon all the lines of action on which he had worked through the best years of his life, and to put into other men's hands fresh possibilities. I call that conduct magnificent." — *Prof. Elmslie*.

III. Providence Guiding to the Right Man. — Chapter 9. The story of divine Providence in this chapter is interesting as showing the interweaving of many threads to produce one picture of life. Saul was guided to Samuel, and Samuel was guided to Saul, by means of several seemingly trivial incidents. In this story we have an illustration of how God guides men and controls affairs without interfering in any way with the free will and choice of men. He guides by the free will of men, and not by overbearing it. Stray asses led Saul to his kingdom. A shower, it is said, decided the fate of Europe at the Battle of Waterloo. F. W. Robertson says that the barking of a dog affected his whole life, changing his purpose from a military life to the ministry. A storm at sea destroying the Armada changed the course of history in England. Some one has said that "had Cleopatra's nose been shorter the whole face of the world would have been changed."

IV. The Preparation of Saul. — 10: 1-16. 1. By birth Saul was a Benjamite. He was born probably in Gibeah of Benjamin, and was probably in the prime of his manhood. "By selecting a king from this least and nearly extinct tribe (Judg. 20), divine wisdom designed to remove all grounds of jealousy among the other tribes." — *J. F. and B.* His rejection by some, even after his election (10: 27), shows how great the danger was, especially from Ephraim or Judah, the rival tribes. **Power of Physical Size.**

2. Saul was tall and commanding in person. Size impresses the imagination of unsophisticated people. This new ruler is conjectured to have been not less than seven feet high, reared in the country, sinewy from farm exposures, in the prime of manly vigor, and in his bulk of massive strength looking "every inch a king." — *C. S. Robinson*.



Mizpeh (The Watchtower of Benjamin).

A combination, and a form indeed,
Where every god did set his seal,
To give the world assurance of a man.
— *Shakespeare's Hamlet*.

Euripides speaks of a "form worthy of a king." Ajax, in Homer,

Towers over all with head and shoulders broad.
— *Iliad III., 227.*

And Turnus, in Virgil,

Out-tops the foremost chieftains by a head.
— *Æneid VII., 784.*

Xerxes was noted as worthy by his stature and comeliness to be the leader of his vast hosts. Herod, or

17. And Samuel called the people together ¹ unto the LORD ² to Mizpeh;

18. And ^a said unto the children of Israel, ³ thus saith the LORD ^b God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and ^c delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all ^d kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you:

19. ^e And ^f ye have this day rejected your God, who himself ^g saved you out of all your ^h adversities and your ⁱ tribulations; and ye have said unto him, *Nay*, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands.

20. ^j And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken.

21. ^k When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of ^l Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: ^m and when they sought him, he could not be found.

¹ Judg. 11: 11; 20: 1.

Rev. Ver.: ^a he said.

^c But.

ⁱ So Samuel brought all the tribes

² 1 Sam. 7: 5, 6.

^b the God.

^f saveth.

of Israel near, and.

³ Judg. 6: 8, 9.

^c I delivered.

^g calamities.

^j And he brought the tribe of Benjamin near by their families,

⁴ 1 Sam. 8: 7, 19; 12: 12.

^d the kingdoms that oppressed you.

^h distresses.

and.

^k the Matrites.

^l but when.

Herodotus, *Thalia*, 20.—*Blaikie*. The reason for choosing such a person was to make him acceptable to the people as their champion, before they had tried him and could know what he was able to do. Size and strength in those days were more important than in more civilized times. Still, David was not half the size of Goliath. "If Napoleon Bonaparte, and Louis XIV., and the Apostle Paul, and Isaac Watts, and many more such 'great' people in history had not been little men, we should almost be tempted to assert that a large and powerful body is essential to successful leadership."—*C. S. Robinson*.

3. Saul was set apart by Samuel's anointing him for his work. It is the source of great power to know what our work is, and that we are appointed to that work by God and man. Many great men have done far more than they otherwise could because they felt that they were children of destiny.

4. Saul had the natural characteristics which made it possible for him to be a great and useful king. He was modest, not conceited. He had the military instinct, a capacity for generalship, a shrewd mind, patience that could wait, "the unflinching nerves, the quick eagle eye, the generosity to unworthy opponents which makes success so graceful and imperial command so easy to endure."—*Wilberforce*. And he had that indescribable personal magnetism which made him a popular idol.

5. In addition to his natural qualifications, Saul was specially prepared to assume his kingdom by the Holy Spirit of God, who "turned him into another man," and "gave him another heart," not a new heart in the New Testament sense, but "a change in mental power and energy"; a capacity for ruling and leading the people of which before he was destitute. He had been brought up on a farm, and was unacquainted with statesmanship. The qualities he needed for his new and untried position were imparted to him. He was a different man from that hour. Compare Henry V. as Prince of Wales, running wild with Falstaff, and his character after he became king.

V. **The Election of Saul as King.**—Vs. 17-25. 17. Samuel called the people to Mizpeh, the hill near Ramah, his home, where the great assemblies were often held.

18. And said. See above, under Heading II.

19. By your tribes, and thousands, as the people were organized.

20. The choice was first made by lot, so that it would be shown to the people that the king was selected by God, and therefore they could safely accept him. Saul was naturally fitted to be king.

21. When they sought him, he could not be found. Knowing that he had been divinely chosen, and therefore that his name would be drawn in the lot, his bashful modesty led him to keep out of sight. He could not know that he would be received by the people, nor just what to do if he were accepted. "It is good to be conscious of our unworthiness and insufficiency for the services to which we are called, and to avoid ostentation, and

22. Therefore they ^m inquired of the LORD further, ⁿ if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff.

23. And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward.

24. And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him ¹ whom the LORD hath chosen, that *there is* none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, ² God save the king.

25. Then Samuel told ³ the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote *it* in a book, and laid *it* up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.

26. And Saul also went ^o home to Gibeah; and there went with him ^p a band of men, whose hearts God had touched.

27. But ^q the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and brought him no ^r presents. But he held his peace.

^{1,2} Sam. 21: 6.

^{2,3} 1 Kings 1: 25, 39. ² Kings 11: 12.

³ Deut. 17: 14, etc. ¹ Sam. 8: 11, etc.

Rev. Ver.: *m* asked.

ⁿ Is there yet a man to come hither?

^o to his house to.

^p the host whose.

^q certain sons of Belial.

^r present.

whatever may excite opposition and envy. But we should be careful not to run into the opposite extreme by refusing the employments to which the Lord calls us, through meanness of spirit and unbelief." — *Scott*.

22. **They inquired of the LORD.** Probably through the high priest. **Hid himself among the stuff.** The baggage. Many of the people had come from a distance, and required some baggage.

23. **He was higher than any of the people.** See above. This fact impressed the people who looked at the outward appearance, for they could not see his heart and character.

24. **God save the king.** These acclamations were the people's acceptance of the divine selection.

25. **Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom.** He laid down the principles and limitations of the kingly power. He instituted a limited monarchy with a written constitution.

VI. The Establishment of the Kingdom. — Vs. 26, 27; 11: 1-15. **26. And Saul also went home to Gibeah.** In Benjamin, four miles north of Jerusalem, and about two miles from Ramah. He had much quiet work to do in preparing himself for his work, and there was no immediate occasion for his taking any public part in affairs. **With him a band of men** (R. V., "the host," or "men of valor,") **whose hearts God had touched.** That they should accept him as king, and be willing to aid him. They must have been brave and distinguished men. They were the nucleus of his army and his government. He was strong in his friends. "The highest prudence and sagacity marked all the early period of the reign of the first king." — *Ellicott*.

27. **But.** There was opposition at first from *certain sons of Belial*. That is, "sons of worthlessness," lawless, worthless, wicked persons. **How shall this man save us?** Compare Cassius' speech concerning Cæsar (*Julius Cæsar*, 1: 2).

"It doth amaze me,
A man of such a feeble temper should
So get the start of the majestic world,
And bear the palms alone."

"Upon what meat doth this our Cæsar feed,
That he is grown so great?"

But he held his peace. He patiently bided his time till he could prove himself worthy to be king. He did not have to wait long. Israel was attacked by an invading army of Ammonites from east of the Jordan, under Nahash. Saul summoned the warriors of the nation; and 330,000 men assembled around his standard. A great victory was gained, which established the confidence of the people in the new leader, and his authority was confirmed. He still had the advice and counsel of Samuel. He thus entered upon a career

that might have ended in untold usefulness and blessedness. Wonderful and beautiful possibilities were spread out before him, like the promised land before Moses on Pisgah. The morning of his kingdom rose almost cloudless.

POSSIBILITIES. There lie in every one of us almost infinite possibilities. God has made us to be kings and priests. He has brought every one of us to a kingdom. Power, usefulness, goodness, influence, helpfulness, victory over sin are all before us. Out of the little acorn grows the oak. The helpless babe in the bulrushes becomes Moses the statesman and general. Weak and sinful human souls become saints in white and angels excelling in strength.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. We often earnestly desire things which are not best for us. We are too ignorant of the issues to insist on any worldly good.

"Not what we wish, but what we want,
Oh, let thy grace supply;

The good, unasked, in mercy grant,
The ill, though asked, deny."

2. It is hard to grow old gracefully; to see what is assuredly the best, and in which we have put our whole lives, fading away, and a lesser and different good prevailing by other hands.

3. Even good men may have bad children. There are those who will go astray under the best of influences, as Adam in Eden, and Judas among the disciples of Jesus. The rule is that if we train up children in the way they should go, they will not depart from it; but there will be exceptions, for each child has a will and a choice of his own. Sometimes children refuse to be trained.

4. People now reject God (1) by determining to follow their own wills instead of God's; (2) by refusing to perform a known duty; (3) by rejecting God's Word; (4) by not believing on Jesus Christ; (5) by neglecting the influences of the Spirit; (6) by all deliberate sins against God; (7) by neglecting the worship of God; (8) by keeping him out of their hearts and thoughts.

5. We often refuse God's best gifts, and then he can only give us the second best.

6. God sometimes yields to our requests because he sees that we are not fitted for the higher blessings he wishes to bestow upon us.

7. God will bring good out of our evil, and do the best possible for those who will not accept the very best.

8. Outward advantages, of beauty, family connections, wealth, personal attractions are the pedestal on which a man stands; but the pedestal is not a part of the man. The man alone should be measured in a true estimate of his value.

9. When God has a great work for us to do he prepares us in various ways for that work.

10. We must expect both friends and enemies; taking our friends to our hearts and overcoming opposition by our patience, silence, and by the proof in deeds of what we can do.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Be sure and include the whole section in your teaching. See Wilberforce's *Heroes of Hebrew History*. Compare Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.

SUBJECT: A YOUTH WITH GREAT POSSIBILITIES.

I. THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA IN ISRAELITISH HISTORY. The Israelites desiring a king. Why? Rejecting Samuel. Rejecting God. Desiring the second best.

Illustrations. "What more than aught else characterized the Jew was his confident belief in a brilliant and happy future for humanity."—*Renan*. From the first, a Messiah, a Messianic kingdom that would bless all nations, was their hope and joy. Other nations looked back, the Jew looked forward for his age of gold. The earthly kingdom was to be a symbol of this glorious kingdom. Emerson bids us "hitch our wagon to a star"; to have a high and glorious ideal ever before us.

Illustrations. If we refuse the best, which God offers us, he gives us the next best. If the quarry will not build a temple, then a house; if the house is refused, then a hut, a barn, a cave, or at last a stone post for a guide post and a warning. If the steel is unfit for a watch spring, it may become a wagon axle, or a baby carriage hoop, or a mere weight.

II. PROVIDENCE GUIDING TO THE RIGHT MAN.

Illustrations. Often little things in life are like the slight movements of a railroad

switch, which change the destination of trains. "The flight of birds from north to south changed the course of Columbus' ships to the southern half of this western hemisphere and led to the settlement of that section by the Latin race. God's Providence chose this northern continent for a Protestant people with an open Bible." An axe carelessly placed near the compass of the Mayflower changed the direction of the ship, and led to the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth, instead of New York.

III. THE PREPARATION OF SAUL FOR HIS WORK.

IV. THE SELECTION OF THE KING.

V. POSSIBILITIES.

Illustration. The schoolboy laboring at his A B C can have no conception of the infinite possibilities of literature of every kind, which can be builded, like a magnificent temple, from the few and simple letters of the alphabet. Who could imagine that such a world as this, with its infinite variety, could be formed almost entirely of thirty elements, with thirty or forty more rarely found?—*American Cyclopædia*. Saul's life at this time was elemental, with as wonderful possibilities as the twenty-six letters of the alphabet or the sixty-four elements of matter.

Illustration. There is a sandstone in the isle of Skye which may be moulded like dough when first found, but soon hardens into stone. "So some simple minerals which are as hard as glass in our cabinets are often flexible and soft in their native beds. This is the case with asbestos, sahlite, tremolite, and chalcedony, and it is reported also to happen in the case of the beryl. The marl recently deposited at the bottom of Lake Superior is soft, but if a piece be taken up and dried it becomes so hard that it can only be broken by a smart blow of the hammer."—*Robert R. Dougherty, Ph. D.*

LESSON VII.—NOVEMBER 17.

SAUL REJECTED.—I SAMUEL 15: 10-23.

Golden Text.—*To obey is better than sacrifice.*—I SAM. 15: 22.

THE SECTION includes chapters 13 to 15, together with a view of the closing period of Saul's life.

PICTURE.—Saul and the witch of Endor.—*Allston*.

TIME.—Perhaps about B. C. 1065, at least ten years after the inauguration of Saul.—*Keil*. According to Usher, B. C. 1079.

PLACE.—Gilgal, in the Jordan valley, near Jericho.

SAMUEL.—Still prophet and priest of Israel, though now no longer judge. His official position, as well as his experience and age (now past eighty), makes him even yet the chief personage in the councils of the nation. His home is at Ramah.

SAUL.—Now about fifty years old, holding his court at Gibeah, four miles north of Jerusalem. His wife's name was Ahinoam. The names of three sons and two daughters are given (I Sam. 14: 49). The general of his army was his cousin Abner. His reign lasted till B. C. 1055.

DAVID was now a young man at Bethlehem.

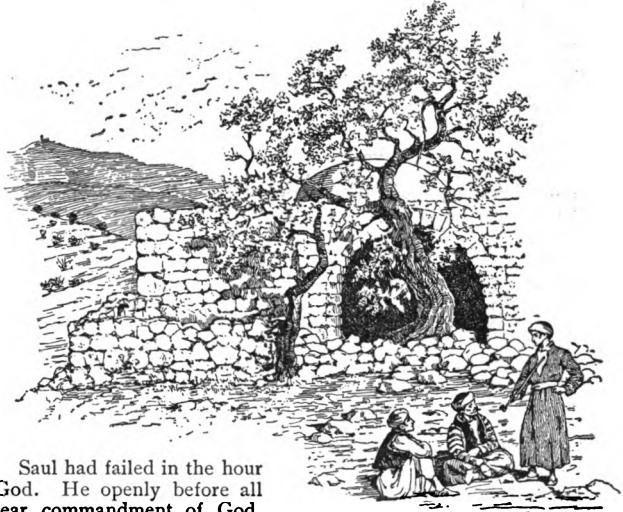
PRONUNCIATIONS.—A'gäg; Am'älëk; Am'älëkites; Gîb'ëäh; Philis'tines.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Circumstances. In our last lesson we saw the beginning of the kingdom and Saul well established on his throne. The next ten years or more, up to the time of our present lesson, were spent in organizing the army, arranging the government, in resisting the encroachments of the Philistines, and in various victorious campaigns in self-defence against the surrounding nations. Saul showed himself to be a skilful general, and proved that he had in him the possibilities of a great king. Only the warlike Philistines were able to resist him and his people, and these were very troublesome and oppressive. There are hints of a royal court, and those kingly exactions of which Samuel had forewarned the people (compare 8: 11 with 14: 52). These earlier years of Saul's reign were his season of probation, his testing time to prove whether he would be the right king for God's people, worthy to lead them onward

and upward in spiritual life as well as temporal prosperity, and so be the ancestor of the Messiah who should fulfil the promises of God and the mission of his people. To do this it was necessary that Saul should be RELIGIOUSLY OBEDIENT TO GOD AND UNSELFISHLY PATRIOTIC.

II. The First Test of Saul. — 13: 2-15. (*Two years after Saul began to reign, 13: 1.*) The Philistines held strongholds among the Israelites, through which they were enabled to keep the people in partial subjection, and make raids upon the harvest fields. One of these garrisons was at Geba, only three miles from Saul's capital at Gibeah. Jonathan, Saul's son, a brave as well as noble young man, attacked this garrison and conquered it. This daring act aroused the whole Philistine nation, who assembled in great numbers, with 3,000 (30,000 is probably a copyist's error) chariots and 6,000 horsemen — two to each chariot. Saul assembled the Israelites at Gibeah, but they were poorly armed (only Saul and Jonathan having swords), and were so terrified by the military array of the Philistines that many deserted and hid in caves and thickets or fled across the Jordan, while those who remained trembled with fear. Neither king nor people dared make a move without the sanction of God. Samuel had agreed to come within seven days and offer sacrifices and make known the will of God. Six days had gone, and the seventh day was passing, yet no Samuel appeared. To a commander like Saul, who saw that the enemy might swoop down upon them like an eagle from his eyrie at any hour, that every moment's delay weakened his own forces and strengthened the enemy, such a delay was almost intolerable. The temptation was very strong to be his own priest, to offer the offerings, contrary to God's law and his agreement with Samuel, and press into action. He yielded to the temptation at the last moment, and had offered the burnt offerings, when the venerable prophet appeared on the scene. Saul had failed in the hour of trial. He did not trust God. He openly before all the people disobeyed a clear commandment of God. Samuel announced the consequences to the king. The kingdom could not continue in his family, nor reach its highest success under him. A portion of his possibilities was lost; only "the second best" remained to him. But he was not deposed; other opportunities were open to him. Possibly he might retrieve what was lost if he would. He was still a great king. God had not withdrawn his spirit from him. He gave him even then a great victory over the Philistines, for his people's sake, and to encourage him to faith and obedience.



Mosque and Tomb at Ramah.

III. The Second Test. — 15: 1-9. *Probably eight or ten years later.* "On the southern borders of Israel dwelt one of their most harassing and unconquerable enemies, the Amalekites, a fierce, untamable race of wanderers, who roamed at large through those deserts which lie between Southern Judea and the Egyptian frontier." — *Ellicott*. "These fierce marauders constantly hovered on the borders, swelled the Philistine armies, or followed in the rear, like Tartar hordes, pillaging and massacring, and, as the Israelites had no cavalry, retreated without loss to the security of their deserts." — *H. Milman*. Samuel brought a commandment of the Lord to Saul that he should declare war against the Amalekites, and utterly destroy them and all their possessions.

THE JUSTICE AND MERCY IN THIS ORDER. (1) Israel could have no peace and prosperity so long as these marauders devastated their borders. (2) They had shown by a long course of enmity that they would not change their conduct. (3) "The cup of iniquity in this people was filled up. Its national existence, if prolonged, would simply have worked

10. Then came the word of the LORD unto Samuel, saying,
 11. It¹ repenteth me that I have set up Saul *to be* king: for he is² turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And³ it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night.

¹ Gen. 6: 6, 7. ² Sam. 24: 16. ³ Josh. 22: 16. 1 Kings 9: 6.Rev. Ver.: ^a Samuel was wroth.

mischievous to the commonwealth of nations." — *Ellicott*. "It pleased God to set a brand of infamy on the Amalekites, on account of their inhumanity, treachery, and impiety, and to take the most exemplary vengeance of them, in order to create the utmost abhorrence of such practices in the eyes of all men." — *Waterland*. (4) The kingdom of God could not extend according to God's promise, unless these people were either peaceful or out of existence. They would not be peaceful; therefore they must pass out of existence.

THE HARD DUTY. A TEST OF OBEDIENCE. The marauding Amalekites were rich in cattle, sheep, camels, and asses, and they carried their wealth with them wherever they went. But the Israelites were forbidden to take one of them for their own use, but were commanded to destroy all this wealth. The reason was no doubt to hold the motives of the Israelites on a high plane. They were executioners of God's will, not marauders seeking plunder. They were doing a high duty, and it would degrade it in their own eyes, and in the opinion of others, if they had made gain to themselves. They would soon be as bad as those they destroyed and become an ambitious, conquering people, regardless of the right of others.

It was very hard for both king and people to let slip out of their hands such vast wealth, which they could retain as well as not. The command seemed unreasonable and hard. And Saul was doubly tempted; for not only did he covet the riches, but the proposed course endangered his popularity with the whole army. **A Great Temptation.** "Certainly," says Prof. Isaac Hall, "an Oriental army of almost any period would have revolted before they would have destroyed such spoil." The test of Saul's obedience and faith, therefore, must have been far stronger than it now seems to a cursory reader. But he had the plain command of God for a help, and his future happiness and prosperity for an inducement to withstand the temptation.

IV. Saul Failed to Stand the Test. Saul entered heartily upon the work. He led two hundred and ten thousand Israelites against the Amalekites and nearly annihilated them; but he spared their king, probably to grace his triumph on his return; and, with his consent, the people brought home alive for their farms the best of the cattle and sheep, destroying only the vile and the refuse.

V. Saul Brought Face to Face with His Sin. — Vs. 10-14. 10. Came the word of the Lord unto Samuel, probably at Ramah, his home.

It repenteth me. He did not regret his action, but his feelings and his action were changed toward Saul. As the same sun changes the effect of its rays upon a live plant, when the plant dies. The rays are the same; but as before they brought fresh life, so now they bring death. God's goodness would have one result upon Saul obedient, another upon him disobedient. **And it grieved Samuel.** Literally, *it burned (in him)*. The R.V. translates, *and Samuel was wroth*. His feeling was one of the deepest indignation, mingled with grief, at Saul's conduct. In the righteous **Samuel Indignant**, these two feelings are united. Grief and indignation burned in Samuel. (1) Because Saul was so utterly foolish as to throw away every good God offered him. (2) Because of the effect of such an example upon the morals and religion of the country. (3) Because disobedience made it impossible for Saul to be successful, and bring prosperity to the country. (4) It may have been a disappointment to Samuel, as the one who brought Saul before the people; it entailed an exceedingly hard duty on Samuel, which would end all his influence over the king (10: 35). **And he cried unto the Lord all night.** This shows how deeply Saul's disobedience cut his very heart. So Moses had prayed four hundred years before (Ex. 32: 11-13). So Christ wept over Jerusalem (Matt. 23: 37). He prays that Saul may be forgiven; that the threatened danger may be averted; that God will bring good in some way out of this great evil. Samuel chose the true course of all the children of God; and God answered his prayer in spirit, by substituting the nobler David in place of Saul. He answered him also in giving him the wisdom and the courage to reprove the victorious king.

THE FEELING OF THE GOOD TOWARD THE WICKED. (1) Never a feeling of hatred. (2) Indignation at the evil they bring upon the world. (3) Grief that they should do so

12. And ^b when Samuel rose early to meet Saul in the morning, ^b it was told Samuel, saying, Saul came to ¹ Carmel, and, behold, he set him up ^a a place, and is gone about, and passed on, and gone down to Gilgal:

13. And Samuel came to Saul: and Saul said unto him, ² Blessed be thou of the LORD: I have performed the commandment of the LORD.

14. And Samuel said, What *meaneth* then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?

15. And Saul said, They have brought them from the Amalekites: ³ for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed.

¹ Josh. 15: 55.

³ Gen. 3: 12. Prov. 28: 13.

Rev. Ver.: *b* omit *when*, and put *and* before it.

² Gen. 14: 19. Judg. 17: 2. Ruth 3: 10.

c a monument.

wickedly. (4) An earnest desire that they should turn from their evil ways. (5) If this fails, then a willingness to let justice take its course.

12. **Saul came to Carmel.** Not Mount Carmel, but a city about seven miles south-east of Hebron, through which Saul would naturally return from his battle field. Here dwelt Nabal (chap. 25), and in its neighborhood much of David's outlaw life was spent. **And, behold, he set him up a place:** a monument. Literally, *a hand, a stone pointing to his great victory.* Jerome says it was an arch of myrtles, palms, and olives. **And is gone about:** taken another road than that by which Samuel had come. **And gone down to Gilgal.** In the same place where Saul's kingdom had been confirmed and warnings had been uttered (13: 13, 14) it was to be taken from him.

13. **Blessed be thou,** etc., a form of welcome. **I have performed the commandment of the Lord.** So he tried to persuade himself, by looking only at that part of his conduct which was in accordance with the command. But that was not obedience. A man who steals only half that he might is not honest. A man that tells a lie is not truthful because part of his words are true. "It would be as well to ask if Ananias and Sapphira did not make a sacrifice to God, proportioned to the amount they brought to the apostles."—*Hanna.*

14. **What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep?** "Saul is convicted of falsehood by the voices of the animals which he has spared, contrary to God's command."—*Lange.*

VOICES OF NATURE TESTIFYING AGAINST SIN. The world is full of voices testifying against sin. (1) The voice of conscience and the moral nature; (2) the Holy Spirit; (3) the Word of God; (4) the providence of God; (5) the laws of nature, and their effects when broken; (6) every act is recorded in the books of nature; each word spoken is recorded in the vibrations of the air; each visible act is photographed by the light, so that an eye somewhere in the universe could see the act as if it were just performed. See a capital little book, *The Stars and the Earth.*

VI. Saul's Vain Excuses.—Vs. 15, 21. Saul makes four excuses for what he had done.

FIRST. He did obey, in making the expedition and almost exterminating the Amalekites.

SECOND. He saved only the best, that it would be so unwise to destroy. Why should he throw away what God had put in his hands?

THIRD. The people were to blame. **15. The people spared the best.** So Adam laid the blame of his sin on Eve. No doubt the people pressed the king very hard, to permit them to save the best of the cattle. Saul himself yielded the more easily because his own desires were with the people's, and he was not good or wise enough to appreciate the divine reasons.

FOURTH. They broke the command for the Lord's own sake. **To sacrifice unto the Lord thy God.** The falsehood and hypocrisy of these words lay upon the very surface; for even if the cattle spared were really intended as sacrifices to the Lord, not only the people, but Saul, also, would have had their own interests in view, since the flesh of thank-offerings was appropriated to sacrificial meals.—*Keil.* And it is not at all probable that this was anything more than an excuse. They would atone for sparing the wealth for themselves, by devoting a part.

16. Then Samuel said unto Saul, Stay, and I will tell thee what the LORD hath said to me this night. And he said unto him, Say on.

17. And Samuel said,¹ *When thou wast little in thine own sight, wast thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the LORD anointed thee king over Israel?*

18. And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed.

19. Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst ^eevil in the sight of the LORD?

20. And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and have gone the way which the LORD sent me, and have brought Agag, the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.

21. But the people took of the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief ^fof the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the LORD thy God in Gilgal.

22. And Samuel said,² *Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold,³ to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*

23. For rebellion *is as* the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness *is as* ^giniquity and ^hidolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from *being* king.

¹ 1 Sam. 9: 21.

² Psa. 50: 8, 9. Prov. 21: 3.

Isa. 1: 11, 12, 13, 16, 17.
Jer. 7: 22, 23. Mic. 6: 6-8.

³ Eccl. 5: 1. Hos. 6: 6; Matt. 5: 24: 9: 13;

12: 7. Mark 12: 33.

Rev. Ver.: ^d Though. ^e that which was evil.

^f of the devoted things, to sacrifice.
^g idolatry.
^h teraphim.

REASONS AND EXCUSES. We must always distinguish between the excuses men give for their conduct, and the real reasons for it. For there is often a great difference between them. The excuses men give for not becoming Christians are often very different from their reasons. Answering the excuses will accomplish but little; we must meet the hidden reasons. So, in dealing with ourselves, we should discover the reasons for our course, and not be content with the excuses we are tempted to give.

17. **When thou wast little . . . the Lord anointed thee king.** All you have and are is the gift of God. You did not even dream of the honor he has put upon you, much less gain it for yourself. Therefore, obedience is doubly due from you.

18. **The sinners the Amalekites.** Here we see why they were to be destroyed.

19. **Didst fly upon the spoil.** "Fly" expresses his eager, passionate craving.

20. **I have obeyed.** Saul was not penitent, but blind still. **And have brought Agag,** contrary to the express command of God, and yet he sees in it a proof of obedience. Agag was probably a hereditary official title among the Amalekites, like Pharaoh among the Egyptians, and Caesar among the Romans.

VII. Saul Condemned; and Rejected from the Divine Plan to which he was selected by God. — Vs. 22, 23. **22. And Samuel said,** inspired by the Spirit of God. **Hath the Lord as great delight, etc.** The outward forms are nothing if the true spirit is wanting. God has not the slightest need of anything we can give him, for he has everything already; but he does want our love, our trust, our obedience, expressed in action and life. From its very nature, **to obey is better than sacrifice**, for it is the very thing for which the sacrifice is required. Forms as a substitute for the spirit of worship, gifts as a substitute for love, never can be acceptable. Compare Mrs. Hemans' poem, "Bernardo del Carpio," where the king, promising to restore to one of his courtiers his father, brings him dead instead of living.

23. **Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.** Public disobedience was treason to God, a renouncing of God, as really as was seeking from witches and demons what could only come from God. It was apostasy, it was treason. **And stubbornness,** obstinate resistance to him; is no better than *iniquity* (or *idolatry*, as in R.V.) and *idolatry*: teraphim, household idols, "venerated as the arbiters of good and evil fortune." Disobedience

is in fact idolatry, because it elevates self-will into a god. **Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord.** Because thou hast shown thyself utterly unfit to be king of God's people, whose only hope of prosperity lay in obedience to God. **He hath also rejected thee from being king.** Just as the leader rejects from his orchestra the musician who will not keep time and tune; as the general rejects the officer who will not obey orders. The words of Saul were rendered still more effective by the incident of rending Saul's garment (vs. 27, 28). "It does not indeed imply that Saul would cease to reign, but it does imply that God would no longer countenance him as king, would no longer make him his instrument of deliverance and blessing to Israel, but would leave him to the miserable feeling that he was reigning without authority. More than that, as we know from the sequel, it implied that God was about to bring his successor forward, and thereby exhibit both to him and to the nation the evidence of his degradation and rejection." — *Blaikie*.

A LOST KINGDOM. This story comes with great force to us as individuals, and as a nation. Disobedience is the certain way for us to lose the kingdom of God. It develops into all sins and crimes; it leads us to all manner of miseries. So, too, the nation which disobeys God is doomed. This is especially true of a nation like ours, where the people are the real sovereigns. If they reject God's laws, God will reject them.

VIII. Saul Working Out His Destiny. — We shall, throughout the remainder of this quarter, come in contact with Saul's life in connection with David's. But we should here trace out the fruits of Saul's sin to the end of his course. Saul's disease of sin was now beyond remedy. As to the foolish virgins of the parable the door was shut. "Too late, too late! ye cannot enter now." He lived with the handwriting on the wall ever blazing before his eyes. "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting."

Black despair,
The shadow of a starless night, was thrown
Over the world in which I moved alone.

— *Shelley*.

Like Adam, Saul was driven out of Paradise, and the flaming cherubim of his own evil nature prevented his return. He gradually lost his kingly nature and power. He grew worse and worse, more and more wretched. His faults developed, — treachery, vanity, selfishness, iniquity, blasphemy. He became almost insane. As in the story of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, the conflict of the two natures within him ended in the complete absorption of the good by the evil. "Such of the wicked as escape immediate punishment receive, not after a long time, but during a long time, not a slower, but a longer punishment. Such an one is kept in life as in a prison that has no outlet or mode of escape; yet he may enjoy frequent feasts, may transact business, may receive presents and kindnesses, like the men who play with dice, or at draughts in prison, with the rope hanging over their heads." — *Plutarch in The Delay of Divine Justice*. "Saul's worst qualities had now become petrified. His wilfulness, his selfishness, his passionateness, his jealousy had now got complete control, nor could their current be turned aside. He was like the man in the iron cage in the *Pilgrim's Progress*, who gave his history: 'I left off to watch and be sober; I laid the reins upon the neck of my lusts; I sinned against the light of the word and the goodness of God; I have grieved the Spirit, and he is gone; I tempted the devil, and he is come to me; I have provoked God to anger, and he has left me; I have so hardened my heart that I cannot repent.' " — *Blaikie*. When Saul forsook God, then God necessarily forsook him, and an evil spirit took the place in his heart of the Spirit of God; as when one goes out of the sunshine into the dense shade, the warmth and cheer depart, and the cold takes their place. We see no signs of God's doing anything directly to hasten Saul's doom. He was left to work out the natural results of an evil heart and a life guided by passion and selfishness, without the help and direction of God. He spent his time in hunting David, instead of overcoming his enemies. His kingdom was thus neglected, his people discontented, many of his best men abandoned him and went over to David, and were driven into the ranks of the enemy. His army lost courage. He spent his force in envy and passion, instead of in managing his kingdom. And in the last great battle he was weakened and worn by spending the night in consulting a witch, instead of preparation for his work. So that he perished miserably by suicide at last. "He ate of the fruit of his own way, and was filled with his own devices" (Prov. 1: 31). Solomon's description in Proverbs 1: 24-32, seems to have been a portrait of Saul. His sun that rose so resplendently in the morning set in an awful tragedy of darkness and storm. Saul's life is one of the saddest tragedies in all history.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

James Sime's *Kingdom of All Israel*; Dr. William M. Taylor's *David*; Geikie's *Hours with the Bible*; Talmage's *Sermons*, series 3, "Bleating of Sheep and Lowing of Oxen"; Spurgeon's *Sermons*, series 3, a sermon with seven texts, "Confession of the Insincere Man." Compare F. W. Robertson's *Sermon*, "Obedience the Organ of Spiritual Knowledge," series 2.

Plutarch on *The Delay of Divine Justice*, with notes by Andrew P. Peabody, LL.D.; Byron's *Poem* on "The Death of Saul"; R. Browning's *Poem* on "Saul" in his *Men and Women*; "The Fall of Saul," a sacred epic *Poem*, by John Gunning Seymour, M.A. London, 1836. Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Richard III.*; Coleridge's *Remorse*; Fuller's *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, pp. 110-112; Trench's *Shipwrecks of Faith*.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF SAUL.

1. As God gave Saul great opportunities, and prepared him for a life which would make him a benefactor to his nation and a blessing to the world,—so he gives to every one of us the offer of a kingdom and large opportunities of usefulness and blessing.

2. As before Saul, so before us there are two diverging ways, and we must make our own choice.

3. The great question of our lives is whether we will obey God or not. "Without true piety, the finest qualities of character and the highest position in society will fail utterly to make a true and noble man. If Saul's heart had been true to God, he would have been one of the grandest specimens of humanity; but, lacking this true obedience to God, he made his life an utter failure and his character a moral wreck."—*Taylor*.

4. Life is full of tests of our character. It is both a probation and an education. God bears long with us. He is "slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy."

5. If we change in character, our relations to God must change. The same glorious sun will warm, cheer, enlighten, invigorate; or may harden, wither, burn, destroy.

6. The truly good are not only indignant at sin, but are grieved over sinners, and pray for them.

7. The worst sinners are often unconscious of the depth of their wickedness. "Cleanse thou me from unconscious sins."

8. The hypocrite is like a watch which is so badly made that it stands or goes wrong from its very nature, and the only cure is to give it a new inside.—*Salter*. The sins of the good are eddies contrary to the main current of their lives. The sins of the bad are the main tide, and their good deeds the eddies.

9. Sin is apt to be mean as well as wicked. King Saul, in the most unkingly manner, laid the blame of his sin on the people. So Adam laid the blame on Eve. "Men who are caught in wrong are always doing the most unmanly things in order to get their punishment to be borne by others."—*Robinson*.

10. Obeying a portion of the commands of God is no excuse for disobeying other of his commands.

11. There can be no substitute for obedience; no gifts, no forms of worship can atone for a refusal to obey God.

12. Those who by disobedience prove themselves unfit to be kings lose their kingdom. God's punishments are not arbitrary, but the necessary results of sin.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Include in teaching the whole course of Saul's life as a king to the tragic end.

SUBJECT: A BRIGHT BEGINNING, BUT A SAD ENDING.

1. BRIGHT PROSPECTS, AND A GLORIOUS FUTURE. Such as are set out before us all, to allure us to choose the best.

Illustration. Jeremy Taylor reproduces from some Oriental mystic the story of the king who, when riding out to the chase, met a woman bearing a lighted torch and a pitcher of water. He asked her what she was going to do with them. "To burn up heaven and quench hell," she said, "that men henceforth *An Oriental Story.* may hate sin and love God for himself alone." But God is much wiser than that. He holds out the blessedness of goodness, and pictures the punishment of sin, so that men may be induced to choose the good and hate the evil; so that they may at length learn the high lesson of loving God for his own sake.

II. TESTS IN LIFE. Life is full of tests, which are a golden stairway to heaven, or a fiery descent into hell, as we choose to make them.

III. FAILURE TO STAND THE TESTS.

Illustration. Sometimes bad men, bad nations, which resist every effort for their improvement, must be destroyed to save the rest of the world; as wild beasts and poisonous serpents are destroyed for the good of the world.

APPLICATION. Certain modern enemies must be destroyed, as intemperance; and wholly destroyed, nothing being kept for ourselves because we imagine there is wealth and revenue in it.

Illustration. Nothing can be love to God which does not shape itself into obedience. We remember the anecdote of the Roman commander who forbade an engagement with the enemy, and the first transgressor against whose prohibition was his son. He accepted the challenge of the leader of the other host, met, slew, *A Roman Father.* spoiled him; and then, in triumphant feeling, carried the spoils to his father's tents. But the Roman father refused to recognize the instinct which prompted this as deserving the name of love. Disobedience contradicted it and deserved death. — *F. W. Robertson.*

Illustrations FROM LITERATURE. The impossibility of concealing sin is illustrated by the little book, *The Stars and the Earth*; by "The Cranes of Ibycus," in Schiller's *Poems*; and in Trench's *Lessons in Proverbs*; by "The Dream of Eugene Aram," in Hood's *Poems*.

EXAMPLES of reproving kings, like Samuel's reproof of Saul. John the Baptist reproving Herod. Paul before Agrippa. Elijah and Ahab. Nathan and David. Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar.

IV. THE LOST KINGDOM.

Illustration. See Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the words of the king on repenting: —

"Try what repentance can. What can it not?
Yet what can it when one cannot repent?
My fault is past. But oh, what form of prayer
Can serve my turn? Forgive me my foul murder?
That cannot be; since I am still possessed
Of those effects for which I did the murder," etc.

Illustration. In the old Egyptian "Book of the Dead," lost souls are spoken of as the "Children of Failure"; and any soul that will not struggle in spiritual life to final success is simply a child of failure.

V. THE WORKING OUT OF A BAD CHOICE.

Illustration. "Three of the principal rivers of Scotland rise from the same hillside. Only a very small space of ground separates the sources of the Annan, the Tweed, and the Clyde from each other. At a place called Wolf Clyde, not far from the spot where the Clyde begins to flow, a very strange thing may sometimes be seen. The valley through which the stream of the Biggar runs at this point stretches between the Clyde and the Tweed; and, as its level is only a little higher than the bed of the Clyde, during a high flood part of the water of the Clyde overflows its channel and runs into the Biggar stream, and is carried by it into the Tweed. This happens once, perhaps, in three or four years. And you can understand how very easy it would be to send the Clyde to Berwick instead of to Glasgow, to the German Ocean instead of to the Atlantic, and so alter the whole character and history both of the east and west of Scotland. Now, this is an apt illustration of what sometimes happens in human life." — *Hugh Macmillan, LL.D.*

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT. To what God has called us (Rom. 8: 14-17; 14: 17; Eph. 3: 10; Matt. 5: 13, 14). The help he has given us (John 14: 16, 26). How only we may have a truly successful life (John 1: 12; 3: 16; 1 Pet. 1: 8, 9; Matt. 19: 28, 29). Whose prayer not heard (Matt. 15: 7, 8; Mark 11: 26; John 9: 31). The end of the wicked (Matt. 25: 46; Rom. 2: 5-9; Gal. 6: 7, 8).

LESSON VIII.—NOVEMBER 24.

THE WOES OF INTEMPERANCE.—ISAIAH 5: 11-23.

NOTE FROM THE COMMITTEE, giving the reason for placing this lesson on this date. “(N. B.—The London Sunday School Union is endeavoring to secure the observance of the fourth Sunday in November as ‘Temperance Sunday’ throughout the world.)”

Golden Text.—*Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink.*—ISA. 5: 11.

BOOK.—Isaiah prophesied from the last years of Uzziah, B.C. 759, till about the close of the reign of Hezekiah, B.C. 698, more than sixty years.

THIS PROPHECY may be a general one, as part of the introduction prefixed by Isaiah to his book of prophecies. It refers to the sins of Judah and their punishment, in order to warn the people against the dangers toward which they were wilfully hastening.

PLACE IN BIBLE HISTORY.—2 Kings, chaps. 15-20; 2 Chronicles chaps. 27-32.

EXPLANATORY.

The Lord's Vineyard. In the first part of the chapter the prophet compares the nation of Israel to a vineyard planted by God, “the well beloved,” who had loved them with an everlasting love. He did everything possible for them, that they might bring forth the best fruits,—obedience, sincere worship, righteous living, the beauty of holiness, love, joy, peace, and all the fruits of the Spirit, intelligence, noble character, and missionary work among the nations. He placed them in the best country in the world for the purpose. He hedged them round with laws and divine institutions, and with his own loving care defended them from all enemies. He planted in this vineyard the vines of his promises, his word, his commandments, institutions of religion, instruction in holy things. He placed there the winepress, which represents the various advantages conferred on the people to help them to bring forth good fruit and present it to the Lord. Every influence, every institution, the teachings of the prophets, the hymns of David, the worship at the sanctuary, all aided the people to produce and develop the virtues, praise, love, character, benevolence, devotion, courage which the Lord sought from his vineyard. *Expected Good Fruit.*

NOTE, that as the cultivator of the vineyard was to enjoy the fruits it bore, and the more fruitful it was, and the more industriously he cultivated it for the owner, the more abundant and delightful was his own reward, so it is with those to whom God has intrusted his spiritual vineyard; every fruit God requires is best for themselves. He wants them to use and enjoy. He never “muzzles the ox that treadeth out the corn.” All that pleases him blesses us.

But the expected fruit was not borne on these vines. “He looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.” Gesenius and others think the plant meant is the monk's-hood or nightshade, which produces berries like the grapes in appearance, but poisonous. If we compare the story in 2 Kings 4: 39-41, also Deuteronomy 32: 32, 33 (“vine of Sodom, grapes of gall, bitter clusters”), this will seem probable. The Arabs call them wolf-grapes. The idea is caught by one of our poets when he sings of *Wild Grapes Instead.*

Dead Sea fruits that tempt the taste,
And turn to ashes on the lips.

—Prof. E. Johnson, M. A.

These are described in the verses that follow, including our lesson. They are “catalogued in a series of woes, fruits all of them of love of money and love of wine.” “It is with remarkable persistence that in every civilization the two main passions of the human heart, love of wealth and love of pleasure, the instinct to gather and the instinct to squander, have sought precisely these two forms denounced by Isaiah in which to work their social havoc,—appropriation of the soil and indulgence in strong drink. Every civilized community develops sooner or later its land question and its liquor question.”—Geo. Adam Smith. *Two Great Natural Sins.*

11. Woe ¹ unto them that rise up early in the morning, *that* they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, *till* wine inflame them!

12. And ² the harp and the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts: but ³ they regard not the work of the LORD, neither consider the operation of his hands.

¹ V. 22. Prov. 23: 29, 30. Eccl. 10: 16. ² Amos 6: 5, 6. ³ Job 34: 27. Psa. 28: 5.

On account of these sins the Israelites suffered untold woes. They were overwhelmed by enemies. They lost property, and the fruits of prosperity. They were carried away captive. And, worse than all, they failed in goodness, usefulness, and peace.

I. APPLICATION TO US AS A NATION. To the American people, as a people, God has certainly given a wonderful vineyard, marvellously fruitful and marvellously protected. Every advantage has been given us for bringing forth the fruits of righteousness, liberty, and religion.

II. APPLICATION TO THE INDIVIDUAL. God has intrusted to each of us a blessed and marvellously fruitful vineyard, which we are to culture for him. He has planted his new life in us. He has given us our life, our soul. He gives us each a portion of all those things he has committed to the church as a whole. He makes us fruitful by his Word and his Spirit. He gives us every means of grace. He opens wonderful opportunities before us, expects good fruit, and much of it, from such a vineyard.

Two chief dangers, both to our country and to ourselves, are the love of wealth, and the love of pleasure, both of which are intimately connected with the overwhelming scourge of intemperance.

I. **Covetousness** leads to the selling of strong drink, to renting buildings for saloons and gambling dens. Nothing but the love of money could induce men to enter upon this degrading business. In his beautiful "Deserted Village," Goldsmith says:—

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

II. **The Tyranny of Strong Drink.**—V. 11. Woe unto them. Not a wish, but a warning; not vengeance, but a plain statement of fact.

ILLUSTRATIONS. Evangelist warning Christian to flee from the city of Destruction. Christian and Faithful setting up a sign board at the entrance to the way to the Castle of Giant Despair, from which they had just escaped, warning travellers not to enter that path. **That rise up early in the morning.** The first thing they think of, the first and most urgent business of the day is "More strong drink." "They are already gone into captivity" (v. 13). **That they may follow strong drink.** They do not wait for its fumes to tempt them, but seek the tempter.

ILLUSTRATION. In one of Rogers' *Greyson Letters*, a mad man who says he is well acquainted with the tempter informs us that Satan does not need to tempt some men; for they actually seek him and ask, "Daddy Devil, have you no dainty temptation for me to-day?" **That continue until night.** Drinking is the chief business of the day. It absorbs body and soul; and whosoever drinks intoxicating liquors at all is in danger of coming to that state where drinking is his main business. **Till wine inflame them.** It sets him on fire of hell. It kindles every bad passion. It excites him so that he sees nothing as it really is. He is no longer himself. It burns up body and soul.

III. **The Angels of Social Life are Transformed into Demons.**—V. 12. And the harp, and the viol. The latter word, generally rendered "psaltery," was a stringed instrument played with the fingers, perhaps a lyre, perhaps a dulcimer. **Tabret**, tambourine or timbrel; **pipe**, flute. All the powers of music, and feasting, and social life are joined to enhance the enchanting and attracting power of strong drink. Here lies one of the greatest dangers of intemperance. The music and song intended to elevate the soul and move the nobler emotions is made to be the procress of vice.

The Plenary Council, of Baltimore, declared "intemperance to be a perpetual incentive to sin, drawing numberless souls down to everlasting perdition."

IV. **It Deadens the Moral Nature.**—Vs. 12, 13. 12. They regard not the work of the Lord. They will not look around them and see what God is doing to save them, nor the punishment he sends upon those who continue in their course. Warnings are on every hand, but they will not notice them. Strong drink is an opiate to the conscience, and blinds the eyes to the law of God. "Nothing kills the conscience like steady drinking to a little excess."—*Geo. Adam Smith.*

13. Therefore ¹ my people are gone into captivity, because ² *they have* no knowledge: and their honourable men *are* famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

14. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15. And the ³ mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

16. But the LORD of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

¹ Hos. 4: 6.

² Isa. 1: 3. Luke 19: 44.

³ Isa. 2: 9, 11, 17.

STRONG TESTIMONY. "Lord Shaftesbury, with his unrivalled experience, was right in his conviction that 'it is impossible, absolutely impossible, to do anything permanently or considerably to relieve poverty until we have got rid of the curse of drink'; Lord Beaconsfield said, in the success of our efforts to control it 'is involved the triumph of the social virtues and the character of the great body of the people'; according to Lord Chief Justice Coleridge, we might, but for drink, shut up nine out of every ten jails in England; we could thus, in the opinion of men like Bright and Cobden, make England such a paradise as at present we hardly dream." — *Canon Farrar*.

13. **My people are gone into captivity.** The northern kingdom was carried captive by the Assyrians while Isaiah was preaching to Judah. This was a warning they should take note of. **For lack of knowledge**, which they might have possessed. They were wilfully ignorant. "Sin is always irrational. The course of true wisdom is that of piety." — *Professor Green*. "It was an appropriate punishment for drunkenness and revelry to be carried off into servitude, and in that condition to suffer, as slaves so often did, hunger and thirst." — *Rawlinson*.

V. **It Ruins High and Low.** — Vs. 13, 15. Not only are the common multitude dried up with thirst, but their honourable men are famished. It brings all to temporal and spiritual poverty and famine. 15. **The mean man shall be brought down** far lower than he otherwise would be, and **the mighty man**, rejoicing in the pride of his strength, **shall be humbled**. Like death, intemperance loves a shining mark.

EXAMPLES. "With such examples as we have before us in history and literature, it is idle for any man to pretend to feel insulted by a suggestion of the possibility of his becoming a slave to drink. Neither education nor intellect necessarily places any man above the peril of excess. Who does not know the failing of Pitt, and of many statesmen who were his contemporaries, in what Sir George Trevelyan has described in his harrowing chapter as the 'Age of Gout'? Who does not know the deplorable degeneracy of Bonnie Prince Charlie? Who has not read of the infirmity of Addison? Who has not mourned over the pathetic outcry of remorse and wretchedness uttered by Burns, by Charles Lamb, by Hartley Coleridge? One of the most eminent clergymen and men of genius of this age says, in one of his published letters: 'I must be on my guard, for I find that I am getting an ugly fondness for alcohol.' What multitudes of men, ay, and of women, — men and women of high principles and religious instincts, — have yet been slowly swept into the vortex of excess under the influences of misfortune, of solitude, of depression, or of old age!" — *Canon Farrar*.

VI. **Intemperance Brings Great Numbers to Destruction.** — Vs. 14, 16, 17. 14. **Therefore hell, Sheol, the place of the dead, hath enlarged herself**, because so many more perish through intemperance, who would have otherwise continued to live many years. **And opened her mouth**, like some monster ravenous to destroy, or as the earth opened in an earthquake to swallow up Dathan and Abiram (Num. 16: 30-32). **And their glory, etc.** Every good is ruined by intemperance. This is all the result of God's laws (v. 16), laws made for the purpose of encouraging righteousness.

EXPERT TESTIMONY. It is the continual testimony of physicians that intemperance shortens the life and injures the health. "Alcohol," said Sir Andrew Clark, "is a poison, so is strychnine, so is opium; it ranks with all these agents." He said that for at least twenty-five years he had been physician to one of our greatest hospitals, and had to inquire into the habits and health of about ten thousand people a year, and, as a result of his studies, he held that "health is

17. Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of ¹ the fat ones shall strangers eat.

18. Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope :

19. That ² say, Let him make speed, *and* hasten his work, that we may see *it* : and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know *it* !

¹ Isa. 10: 16.

² Isa. 66: 5. Jer. 17: 15. Amos 5: 18. 2 Pet. 3: 3, 4.

a state which cannot be benefited by alcohol in any degree. Nay, it is a state which, in nine times out of ten, is injured by alcohol; it can bear it sometimes without obvious injury, but be benefited by it never. Alcohol, even in small doses, will take the bloom off, and injure the perfection and loveliness of health, both mental and moral. If there is any honest man who really wants to get at the truth, I would risk all I possess upon the back of the statement that as certainly as he tries the experiment for a month or six weeks, so certainly will he come to the conclusion that, however pleasant alcohol is for the moment, it is not a helper of work." "There is a great deal of injury done to health by the habitual use of wines . . . and alcohol in its various shapes," says Sir William Gull, "even in so-called moderate quantities. It leads to the degeneration of tissues, it spoils the health, and it spoils the intellect." I will quote but one other testimony out of many—that of Sir Henry Thompson, in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "I have no hesitation in attributing a very large proportion of some of the most painful and dangerous maladies which come under my notice . . . to the ordinary and daily use of fermented drink, taken in the quantity which is conventionally deemed moderate." It is so little necessary to support physical exertion that experiments like those of Sir H. Havelock in India, and of Lord Brassey on the Great Northern Railway, and of Dr. Parkes in the case of soldiers on the march, and of Dr. Nansen among Arctic explorers have proved (among multitudes of others) that alcohol is inimical to powers of endurance. At our great foundries, when special efforts are required alcohol is at once knocked off. There are thirty-two thousand prisoners in the three kingdoms, and, though the immense majority of them have been either inebriates, or, at least, non-abstainers, no alcohol is given them during their sojourn in prison for years together, and yet prisoners form one of the healthiest and most long-lived bodies in the country, and constantly leave prison greatly improved in health and in appearance.—*Farrar*. "When our judges tell us from the bench that nine tenths of pauperism and crime are caused by drink, and our physicians that if only irregular tipping were abolished half the current sickness of the land would cease, and our statesmen that the ravages of strong drink are equal to those of the historical scourges of war, famine, and pestilence combined, surely to swallow such a glut of spoil *the appetite of hell must have been still more enlarged, and the mouth of hell made yet wider.*" — *Geo. Adam Smith*.

Sir Henry Thompson.

Effect of Total Abstinence on Prisoners.

17. Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, rather "in their pasture"; the city shall become but a rural pasture land. The waste places of the fat ones, where the few sheep in wide pastures grow fat. Shall strangers, foreigners.

VII. It Leads to Defiance of God. — Vs. 18, 19. 18. That draw iniquity with cords of vanity, such as false reasoning, deceptive excuses. With a cart rope. So strong is their desire for forbidden things that only the strength of a cart rope can express it. "They are magnets drawing every sort of sin toward themselves; or a vast maelstrom into which all sorts of wickedness are sucked down." — *Cowles*. They do not wait to be tempted; they seek after temptation. "They laboriously bring guilt upon themselves, as though they were drawing heavy weights towards them by cords and cart ropes. Some suppose the meaning to be that the sinner is, as it were, harnessed to the punishment which he is dragging after him." — *Professor Green*.

19. Let him (God) make speed. Let God come to punish us if he will; who fears? Expressing utter unbelief in God's threats. They do not believe that the evil threatened will ever come. They are the fools described in Proverbs 1: 24, 25. "This figure of sinners jeering at the approach of a calamity, while they actually wear the harness of its carriage, is very striking." — *George Adam Smith*.

20. Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!

21. Woe unto *them that are* ¹ wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

22. Woe unto *them that are* mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23. Which ² justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

¹ Prov. 3: 7. Rom. 1: 22; 12: 16.

² Prov. 17: 15; 24: 24.

VIII. It Distorts the Perception of Right and Wrong.—V. 20. Call evil good. They baptize wickedness with good names. They advocate the cause of strong drink as promoting temperance and liberty. They do not say, "spirit of wine, thy name is devil," but thy name is joy, pleasure, prosperity, life. People will sell liquor, and let their buildings for saloons, and yet not seem conscious of sin.

ILLUSTRATION. "And many give the name 'smartness' to cheating, or the name 'liberality' to loose views of morals and religion, and claim credit accordingly when they really deserve censure. Among the Buddhists it is forbidden to eat meat, but fish diet is allowed, and the whale is by accommodation included in the family of fish. According to the Japan Evangelist, the Buddhists of Japan who are fond of game call venison 'mountain whale'; and in this way the meat of all game comes under the name of fish for those who would eat it with a clear conscience." — *Trumbull*.

*Good Names to
Bad Things.*

IX. It Leads to Self-Conceit.—V. 21. Wise in their own eyes. Wine makes people self-confident. The drunkard is often the last person to know how much he is under the power of liquor. He thinks he is safe when all his friends know that he is on the brink of a precipice.

See Mrs. Stowe's beautiful story in *The Mayflower*.

X. It Leads to Excess.—V. 22. Mighty to drink wine. The habit grows by indulgence. They can do great things in drinking. They are heroes of the wine cup. But the cup is mightier than they.

ILLUSTRATIONS. Virgil's story of Laocoon and his sons in the embrace of the sea serpents, of which there are statues in many museums. Also Charles Lamb's "Confessions of a Drunkard," in the *Essays of Elia*.

XI. It Leads to the Perversion of Justice.—V. 23. Which justify the wicked for reward. Who for the sake of votes, or money, or influence, give wrong judgments in court, help the wicked to escape justice, make bad laws. Take away the righteousness, etc. Deprive men of their just rights for the sake of bribes.

A BARREL OF WHISKEY.

"A barrel of headaches, of heartaches, of woes;
A barrel of curses, a barrel of blows;
A barrel of tears from a world-weary wife;
A barrel of sorrow, a barrel of strife;
A barrel of all unavailing regret;
A barrel of cares and a barrel of debt;
A barrel of crime and a barrel of pain;
A barrel of hope ever blasted and vain;
A barrel of falsehood, a barrel of cries
That fall from the maniac's lips as he dies;

A barrel of agony, heavy and dull;
A barrel of poison—of this nearly full;
A barrel of liquid damnation that fires
The brain of the fool who believes it inspires;
A barrel of poverty, ruin, and blight;
A barrel of terrors that grow with the night;
A barrel of hunger, a barrel of groans;
A barrel of orphans' most pitiful moans;
A barrel of serpents that hiss as they pass
From the bead on the liquor that glows in the glass."

ILLUSTRATION. A card put up in some of our horse-cars, among the advertisements, reads thus: "A saloon can no more be run without using up boys than a flouring-mill without wheat, or a sawmill without logs. The only question is, Whose boys? yours or mine? our boys or our neighbor's?"

LESSON IX. — DECEMBER 1.

DAVID ANOINTED KING. — 1 SAMUEL 16: 1-13.

Golden Text.—*Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.* — 1 SAM. 16: 7.

THE SECTION includes chapter 16. See also Psalm 78: 70-72.

TIME.—About B. C. 1065 to 1068. Not long after the last lesson. The exact time is uncertain. But Keil argues thus: David was thirty years old when he was made king over Judah, B. C. 1055 (2 Sam. 5: 4). If, then, he was seventeen to twenty years old at this time, the anointing must have been ten to thirteen years before, B. C. 1055.

PLACE.—(1) *Ramah*, Samuel's home, four miles north of Jerusalem. (2) *Bethlehem* six miles south of Jerusalem. Here was Rachel's tomb. Here Ruth, the great-grandmother of David, gleaned in the fields of Boaz. Here, one thousand years later, "David's greater son" was born. Here Jerome composed the famous translation of the Bible into Latin, called the Vulgate (about A. D. 400), the version in common use in the Roman Catholic world.

SAUL.—About fifty years old; king of Israel, but disobedient and rejected.

SAMUEL.—About eighty years old, prophet and priest in Israel. Home in Ramah. Probably in his last years he was writing the chronicles of his time and of the Judges, the substance of which has come down to us in the books of Judges, Ruth, and 1 and 2 Samuel.

DAVID (*the beloved*).—The son of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah. Born at Bethlehem, about B. C. 1085. His mother's name is unknown. He had seven brothers (1 Sam. 16: 10) and two elder sisters, whose names are given, — Zeruiah and Abigail (1 Chron. 2: 16). At the time of this lesson he was a gifted, charming, but retiring youth of seventeen to twenty years.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—(1) The promise and the work of the Holy Spirit. (2) Faithfulness in little things the way to greater (Matt. 13: 12; 25: 29; Luke 19: 17, 26).

PICTURES.—David elected king. — *Hans Memling*. David. — *Michael Angelo*.

PRONUNCIATIONS.—Abin'adāb; Bēth'lēhēmīte; Eli'āb; Jēs'sē; Shām'māh.

1. And the LORD said unto Samuel, ¹ How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing ² I have rejected him from ³ reigning over Israel? ³ fill thine horn with oil, and go, I will send thee to Jesse the Beth-lehemite: for ⁴ I have provided me a king among his sons.

¹ 1 Sam. 15: 35.
² 1 Sam. 15: 23.

³ 1 Sam. 10: 1. 2 Kings 9: 1.
⁴ Psa. 78: 70; 89: 19, 20. Acts 13: 22.

Rev. Ver: *a* from being king over.

EXPLANATORY.

I. Planning for a New Dynasty.—Vs. 1-5. In our last lesson we learned that Saul was rejected from founding a line of kings, because he proved himself unfit for the place and the work. Samuel, after giving his last faithful warning to Saul, returned to his home at Ramah, and henceforth saw him no more.

1. And the Lord said unto Samuel, not a great while after he left Saul, and yet the expression **How long**, implies that some weeks, or perhaps months had elapsed. **Wilt thou mourn for Saul?** God gave Samuel time for the natural expression for his grief; but too long continued, his grief would imply dissatisfaction with God and his providence. Samuel grieved (1) because of his personal affection for Saul; (2) because of his disappointment that one with such high possibilities and large opportunities should throw them away so carelessly, "as swine trample pearls under their feet"; (3) because his own influence over Saul and his power in his counsels and plans were at an end. He could do nothing more in that direction for the good of the nation. Not only Saul, but his country seemed doomed to decline. **Seeing I have rejected him.** The emphasis is on the "I." If God rejected Saul, then it must be wisest and best for all that he be rejected and other plans be adopted.

Samuel's grief for Saul.

2. And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear *it*, he will kill me. And the LORD said, Take a heifer with thee, and say, ¹ I am come to sacrifice to the Lord.

3. And call Jesse to the sacrifice, and ² I will shew thee what thou shalt do: and ³ thou shalt anoint unto me *him* whom I name unto thee.

4. And Samuel did that which the LORD spake, and came to Bethlehem. And the elders of ^b the town ⁴ trembled at his coming, and said, ⁵ Comest thou peaceably?

¹ 1 Sam. 9: 12; 20: 29.
² Ex. 4: 15.

³ 1 Sam. 9: 16.
⁵ 1 Kings 2: 13.

⁴ 1 Sam. 21: 1.
² Kings 9: 22.

Rev. Ver.: ⁵ of the city came to meet him trembling.

THE DIVINE CURE FOR GRIEF. (1) A larger faith in God; a recognition of God's guiding hand even in the things that seem most dark and mysterious. As soon as we realize that our Father is controlling with infinite wisdom and love the events which cause our grief, then we see the dawn of comfort. (2) The second cure for Samuel's grief was in the form of activity. Work in a new line for the good old cause draws the mind away from the grief, and opens the eyes to other ways of gaining the desired end or to better things in the place of the ones lost. So God cured Elijah's despondency a few centuries later (1 Kings 19: 1-15).

"Labor is rest from the sorrows that greet us;
Rest from all petty vexations that meet us."

Fill thine horn, the horns were hollowed out and polished, and used as cups or bottles. Hence the horn became the symbol of power and plenty (cornucopia). With oil, either the usual olive oil, or perhaps the sacred oil used for the tabernacle lights and for anointing priests, and composed of olive oil, cassia, cinnamon, calamus, and myrrh. I will send thee to Jesse, the Beth-lehemite. Jesse was the grandson of Boaz and Ruth, and was probably the chief man of Bethlehem; "the sheik of the village." He was evidently a man of some wealth. The distance was ten or eleven miles. For I have provided me a king. He had not only selected one, but had endowed him with the needful training and talents, and had found him making a right use of them. When God has a work to do he provides fitting instruments. If we think we are set apart for a certain work, and do not do the things which prepare us for doing that work, we may be sure that we have mistaken our destiny.

2. And Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear it, he will kill me: for the act of anointing another king would be regarded as little less than high treason. And Saul, at times under the influence of an evil spirit, jealous for his forfeited throne, and angry at him who declared God's punishment of his sin, might easily, in a fit of insane passion, kill even the prophet of Jehovah. Take a heifer with thee, and say, I am come to sacrifice. Samuel was accustomed to go on a circuit to judge, and it is probable that on such occasions he held religious services, taught the people, and offered sacrifices. It may have been the customary annual sacrifice at Bethlehem (20: 6). He was to say that he was going to the sacrifice, because he was going there. He told the exact truth. The sacrifice would give impressiveness and power to the transaction. That he intended to do something else there was no one's business, and there was no reason why he should tell any one. He simply said nothing about it.

3. And call Jesse to the sacrifice. The sacrifice was religious service, representing communion with God, and was accompanied with acts of devotion, prayers, and sometimes, at least, with addresses. It was followed by a social feast. In all these Jesse and his family were to partake. And I will show thee what thou shalt do. So usually God shows us the way a little at a time. "Step by step the way we see." We go along life's way like a railroad engineer in the night, the headlight showing the tracks but a short distance ahead, but moving on as fast as we go.

4. And the elders of the town trembled at his coming, either because friendliness to Samuel might be regarded by Saul as taking sides against him, and the royal displeasure would be visited upon them; or they were afraid he was coming to denounce some terrible doom upon them like that upon Saul for their wrong-doings; "conscience makes cowards of us all." Comest thou peaceably? Does your coming betoken peace, good-will, the favor of God, or otherwise?

5. And he said, Peaceably: I am come to sacrifice unto the LORD: ¹ sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice. And he sanctified Jesse and his sons, and called them to the sacrifice.

6. And it came to pass, when they were come, that he looked on ² Eliab, and said, Surely the LORD's anointed *is* before him.

7. But the LORD said unto Samuel, ³ Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have ^c refused him: for ⁴ *the LORD seeth* not as man seeth; for ⁵ man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the ⁶ heart.

¹ Ex. 19: 10, 14.

³ Psa. 147: 10, 11.

⁶ 1 Kings 8: 39. Psa. 7: 9. Jer.

Rev. Ver.: *c* rejected him.

² 1 Sam. 17: 13.

⁴ Isa. 55: 8.

11: 20; 17: 10; 20: 12.

1 Chron. 27: 18.

⁵ 2 Cor. 10: 7.

Acts 1: 24.

5. **Sanctify yourselves** by the prescribed ceremonial cleansing, which was a symbol of the purification of the heart by repentance, obedience, and consecration to God. **Called them to the sacrifice.** All were present at the public sacrifice, but the sacrificial feasting that followed would be by families, and Samuel went to Jesse's house for this purpose, doubtless as a welcome guest.

II. **David, the Son of Jesse, Chosen by God.** — Vs. 6-12. The older sons of Jesse were present with their father at the social meal in Jesse's house, and were introduced to Samuel. The narrative seems to imply that Samuel had made known to Jesse that one of his sons was to be selected by God for some high purpose; perhaps he even told him what that purpose was. But it is not at all likely that he revealed this to his sons.

6. **He looked upon Eliab, Jesse's eldest son, tall and fine-looking. Surely the Lord's anointed is before him.** Even Samuel still judged by outward appearances; and this stalwart, soldier-like, middle-aged man seemed "every inch a king."

7. **Look not on . . . the height of his stature.** Even the prophet, like most people since, was influenced by the commanding appearance, especially when a king took an active physical part in the battles, and needed great bodily strength. **For the Lord seeth not as man seeth.** For the Lord sees all; knows all. The most hidden things are as plain to him as the sun at noonday. **For man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.** The heart is "the soul or mind, as it is the fountain and seat of the thoughts, passions, desires, appetites, affections, purposes, endeavors;" "the inner man;" "the understanding;" "the will and character." — *Thayer's Greek-English Lex.* God knows the real man, his inner nature and possibilities, and these depend far more on the heart and intellect than on outward appearance.

GOD LOOKETH ON THE HEART. (1) *Not on one's social rank.* Bethlehem was an insignificant town "among the thousands of Israel." David's family was one of lesser importance. The Bible makes such very short and sharp work with primogeniture as a condition of selection in exalted leadership. "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called" (1 Cor. 1: 26-29). Good Lady Huntingdon used to say she thanked God for the letter M, for he did not tell Paul to say "not any," but "not many." (2) *The Lord does not look upon one's family history.* The lineage of Jesse, Obed, and Ruth was quite humble in its origin.

"Honor and shame from no condition rise;
Act well your part: there all the honor lies."

(3) *The Lord does not look upon one's fortune.* It would not be fair to assert that God always chooses the poor before the rich; but he certainly does not choose the rich for their riches in any case. That is a wise remark of Plutarch, as he contrasts two of his characters: "The poverty of Aristides was more noble than the wealth of Midas." (See James 2: 5.)

(4) *Nor does the Lord look upon one's appearance.* A man is not always great because he is big. John Milton was blind, and Thomas Carlyle was not considered attractive in showy company. Plato tells us that Socrates resembled one of those misshapen pictures of apes and owls painted on the outside of an apothecary's gallipot; but he adds that, although the figures were grotesque, the vessel was truly filled with sweet balsams. Paul was diminutive and half blind, in bodily presence weak, and in speech contemptible. "But," says Chrysostom, "this man of three cubits' height became tall enough to touch the third heaven even before he was martyred." (5) Once more: *The Lord does not look upon one's age* in making his choice of men. Polycarp was converted at nine years of age, Matthew Henry

8. Then Jesse called Abinadab, and made him pass before Samuel. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

9. Then Jesse made Shammah to pass by. And he said, Neither hath the LORD chosen this.

10. ^d Again, Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel. And Samuel said unto Jesse, The LORD hath not chosen these.

11. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, ¹ There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, ² Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither.

12. And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ³ ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to ^e look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he.

¹ 1 Sam. 17: 12.

² 2 Sam. 7: 8. Psa. 78: 70.

³ 1 Sam. 17: 42. Cant. 5: 10.

Rev. Ver.: *d* And Jesse. *e* to look upon.



Shepherd Tending Sheep.

at eleven, President Edwards at seven, Robert Hall at twelve, and Isaac Watts at nine. God chooses his best workers often in the beginning of their intelligent existence. — *C. S. Robinson in Sunday-School Times.*

8, 9. **Abinadab, Shammah.** These two, with Eliab, were the sons of Jesse sent to war against the Philistines (chap. 17: 13). — *Cambridge Bible.* Shammah was the third son of Jesse, and father of Jonadab, — “a very subtle man,” Amnon’s friend (2 Sam. 13: 3), and of Jonathan, who slew a giant of Gath (1 Chron. 20: 6, 7). — *Cook.*

11. **There remaineth yet the youngest.** It seems he was thought of so small account that his father did not suppose it was worth while for him to be present. — *Green.* If some one must care for the sheep, David would be the least missed.

12. **Now he was ruddy.** Referring either to “the red hair and fair skin which are regarded as a mark of beauty in southern countries, where the hair and complexion are generally gark” (*Cambridge Bible*), or to his fresh and rosy complexion. So in

Lamentations 4: 7 it is said that the Nazarites were whiter than milk, and more ruddy in body than rubies. — *Johnson.* **And withal of a beautiful countenance.** Literally, of *beautiful eyes.* His countenance was beautiful with that kind of beauty which belongs to expression rather than to features: its power and attraction lay in the eye. He had the eye of a born poet and musician. — *Tuck.* **And goodly to look to:** fair to see. Nothing is said of his stature. He was probably of ordinary height, and at this time had not attained his full growth. He had the beauty which is the outshining of a beautiful and noble character. He had what Joseph Cook calls the solar light. It was the beauty of cathedral windows, often dull without, till the inner light reveals the glories of the pictured glass.

III. **David’s Natural Endowments.** — The work for which David was chosen was to develop and organize almost out of chaos a great kingdom worthy to be a type of God’s kingdom all down the ages; and more, it was to be a preparation for that kingdom. He must be a general of armies, and compel the surrounding nations to peace. He must be a statesman, and organize the kingdom and develop its resources. He must be a prophet, and reform, organize, and develop the devotional services of the nation by music and by

13. Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and ¹ anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the ² Spirit of the LORD ³ came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah.

¹ I Sam. 10: 1. Psal. 89: 20.

² Num. 27: 18. Judg. 11: 29;
13: 25; 14: 6.

Rev. Ver.: ³ came mightily upon.

hymns of worship. With what talents was he endowed that made it possible for him to become fitted for this great work?

1. He had a good inheritance. "The kindly and fatherly disposition of Boaz and the holy devotion and warm attachment of Ruth were very apparent in the character of their great-grandson." — *Professor Blaikie*.

2. He had physical strength, beauty, and attractiveness.

3. He had natural abilities of a high order and great variety. He was business man, statesman, warrior, musician, and poet. "The rare combination in him of all that was gentle, tender, and mild, with the most exalted enthusiasm, the most noble aspirations, most generous sentiments, the most manly deportment, the most heroic daring, and the most invincible prowess, joined to his invariable consideration for others, his open-heartedness, his humbleness, and the entire absence of all pretension in him, made men feel better when they looked upon him." — *Kitto*. "In his more mature character he appears to unite in himself the high qualities of nearly all who had gone before him, — the heavenly conversation of Enoch; the triumphant faith of Abraham; the meditative thoughtfulness of Isaac; the wrestling boldness of Jacob; the patient endurance of Joseph, no less than his talent for administering a kingdom; the lofty patriotism of Moses, as well as his brilliant fancy; the warlike skill and energy of Joshua; the daring courage of Gideon; the holy fervor of Samuel, — all met in measure in the character of David." — *Professor Blaikie*. David was like his own harp, of many chords. His character is singularly full and versatile. — *Maclaren*.

4. He had the conditions of power over men. "He had a wonderfully rich, lovable character. He moved many men with that irresistible fascination which only the greatest exercise." — *Maclaren*.

IV. **David's Early Training.** — (1) David's home training was excellent in many ways. His parents and his elder brothers would have a powerful influence over him. The atmosphere of a home of piety and intelligence is one of the greatest and most blessed factors in a child's training.

2. He had a training in religion and in the Scriptures then known, which would include the history of his nation up to nearly his own time.

3. His daily duties with the sheep, giving an opportunity for training in business, skill, attention, courage, government. In the seventy-eighth Psalm we read, *He took him (David) from the sheep folds . . . he brought him to feed Jacob his people.*

4. He became physically active and strong through faithfulness in his daily duties. His limbs became "like hind's feet," his arms "broke a bow of steel." He was able to slay a lion and a bear.

5. He had large opportunity to study nature and meditate on nature's God. The psalms he wrote are full of references to natural scenery, — the shepherd, the sun going forth like a bridegroom, the moon and stars, the rivers, the thunderstorm.

"One impulse from the vernal wood
May teach you more of man,

Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can."

V. **David Set Apart for His Work.** — V. 13. Then Samuel . . . anointed him in the midst of his brethren. In their presence. The anointing was the symbol of a setting apart for some special mission appointed by God. It is not at all probable that David's brethren knew the high destiny for which he was anointed.

It was too dangerous a secret to be known to so many; nor did they act as if they knew it at the time of David's visit to the army. *Anointing for His Work.*

The anointing might be for a successor to the aged prophet or to some position in the schools of the prophets. It is doubtful if the meaning of the act was then revealed even to David. It was enough for the young man to know that God had some great work for him to do, and the anointing was a call to prepare himself for that work, and a symbol of the gift of the Spirit, who would prepare him for it. Such a setting apart, such a consciousness that we have a mission to accomplish, a plan of life made in the wisdom and love of God, has a mighty influence on the life. It gives endurance, courage, and

hope. And the Spirit of the Lord came (*mightily*, R. V.) upon David: to influence the mind and heart of the shepherd boy so that he could "grow up into a hero, a statesman, a scholar, and a wise and far-sighted king." The gift of the Holy Spirit is the greatest and best gift of God to man through Jesus Christ. This divine influence is like the spring sun and rain upon the wintry fields. It is life, energy, power, development for every power of heart and mind. And this gift can be received by all. Without the Spirit we are sure to err and fail.

The Gift of the Spirit.

VI. **David's Faithfulness in Preparation.**—David, even if he knew at this time that he was to be king, could not possibly foresee the great work he was to do. He "knew not where he was going," but he knew that, wherever it was, faithfulness in present duty was the only way to reach it. The only way to large things is through faithfulness in little things.

1. It was by the strength and activity gained in doing his best as a shepherd that he was enabled to meet Goliath and do many of the deeds of daring which gave him power as king.

2. He spent his leisure hours in practising music. This early faithfulness was one step by which he came to the court of Saul, and enabled him to organize orchestras and choirs for the service of God, and become the author of a wonderful development of music as an aid to worship.

3. His culture of his poetic talent led to the first great hymn book; a new and original unfolding of the power of song in worship. Much of his usefulness in all ages would have been lost had he neglected this talent.

4. His practice with the sling, in order that he might be the best defender of his flocks against wild beasts and robbers, prepared him for his great battle with Goliath,—a necessary step in his way to the throne.

5. All his faithfulness to his daily duties developed courage, skill, carefulness, business ability, power to govern, knowledge of daily life.

6. David "deeply studied such parts of the sacred Scripture as then existed. His writings continually evince his close acquaintance with it, his admiration of it, his intense appreciation of its value, his love for it."

7. He became early a true child of God. He was thus unconsciously becoming fitted to be a moral reformer and the religious leader of the people.

VII. **Providence Guiding Toward His Work.**—In the verses following the lesson we learn how David came to be introduced into the court of Saul, the beginning of his special training for the throne. Saul was greatly troubled with an evil spirit. "It appears to have been some grievous mental malady;" a deep melancholy would settle upon him at times. His spirits were depressed and gloomy. He "became envious, suspicious, and subject to moody fits of passion, during which he was most dangerous and cruel!"—*Stock*.

"Remarkable, as well as truly parallel, is the case of Philip V. of Spain and the musician Farinelli, in the last century. The king was seized with a total dejection of spirits, which made him refuse to be shaved, and incapable of appearing in council or of attending to any affairs. The queen, after all other methods had been essayed, thought of trying what might be effected by the influence of music, to which the king was known to be highly susceptible." She therefore sent for the famous musician Farinelli, by whose singing the most captivating songs the king was relieved, and the musician received into great favor. (See *Kitto's Daily Bible Illustrations*.) This action of the queen was doubtless suggested by the story of Saul and David. For Saul's friends, having heard of David's great skill as a musician, sent for the young man, who was introduced at court, had great power over Saul, and became his favorite.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

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SUGGESTION TO TEACHERS.

The lesson can be made most attractive and instructive by pointing out the early steps by which David was prepared for his kingdom and his great work. I well remember how Hugh Miller's *My Schools and Schoolmasters* was the first biography that helped me much, because it was the first one which revealed not merely the results, but the processes. So the lesson shows us the process, the steps, the schools and schoolmasters by which David reached fitness for his life's work.

SUBJECT: THE WAY TO THE KINGDOM;

OR, DAVID'S SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLMASTERS.

I. PLANNING FOR A NEW KING (vs. 1-5).

COMPARISONS. God, who stoops to human weakness, who fortified the failing heart of Moses at the burning bush, and the doubting heart of Gideon, and afterwards the weary heart of Elijah, and the trembling heart of Jeremiah, condescends in like manner to the infirmity of Samuel. — *Blaikie*.

II. THE SELECTION OF DAVID (vs. 6-12).

Illustration. David was chosen, not for the excellences of character he already possessed, so much as for the *possibilities* of excellence to be developed by the grace of God, through his obedience. It is like the vision of the sculptor who sees the possible statue in the marble, as Michael Angelo once said of a piece of beautiful marble, outwardly defiled and thrown one side, "I see an angel there and must get him out."

Illustration. "What kind of a man did God choose? A man of physical perfection, — feet like hinds' feet, his arms could break a bow of steel, and sling stones to a hair's-breadth, slay lions, bears, and Goliaths; no flaccid, lascivious weakling. He had a voice of song, and his touch was music sweet enough to soothe away diabolical possession. He was a regular Wagner at organizing orchestras. His great poetic talent gave the world its first and greatest hymn book. He made more appreciative and grand allusions to nature than all the poets of Greece and Rome. He was a great student of the Scriptures then written. The depth and fervor of his piety have been the perennial spring where all ages have drunk most tender love and trust. Nature's best was crowned with the Spirit's better. God picks his brightest Koh-i-noors out of common sand. We may look for the kingliest in the lowliest, if it is obedient to the updrawings of the divine Spirit." — *President Warren*.

III. HIS ENDOWMENTS AND ENVIRONMENT, as in *Explanatory*.

IV. DEDICATION TO HIS WORK. He was anointed for his work, and received the spirit of the Lord to prepare him for it.

Illustration. The soil is full of seeds. Darwin found five hundred in a single cup of mud. If a forest covers the ground and shades it from the sun, many seeds will never spring up. But cut down the forest, give light and air, and many otherwise unknown plants will come into being, and cover the ground with their luxuriance. So with our souls; if we cut down the prejudices, and worldliness, and let the Holy Spirit shine upon our souls, many talents and powers will develop that otherwise would have been unseen and unknown. Compare Gray's *Elegy*, "Full many a gem," etc.

Illustration. The Holy Spirit illumines not merely the religious part of our nature, but every power of mind and spirit. Phillips Brooks, in his Yale lectures on preaching, says that he shall never forget his first experience of a divinity school. "The first place I was taken to at the seminary was the prayer meeting; and never shall I lose the impression of the devoutness with which those men prayed and exhorted one another. On the next day I met some of those men at a Greek recitation. It would be little to say of some of the devoutest of them that they had not learned their lessons." But those who are really and fully under the influence of the Spirit, find his influence enlarging and improving every part of the life.

Illustration.

Like the star
That shines afar,
Without haste,
And without rest,
Let each man wheel with steady sway
Round the task that rules the day,
And do his best!

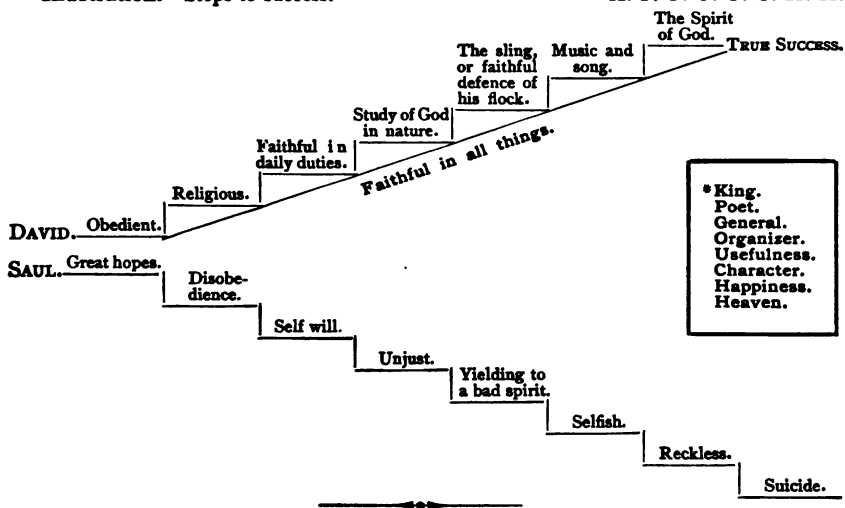
— *Goethe*.

V. FAITHFULNESS IN DAILY DUTIES, PREPARING FOR THE LARGER WORK.

THE BOOK, "*Blessed be Drudgery.*"

Illustration. Steps to success.

K. P. G. O. U. C. H. H.*



LESSON X. — DECEMBER 8.

DAVID AND GOLIATH. — I SAMUEL 17: 38-51.

Golden Text. — *The battle is the Lord's.* — I SAM. 17: 47.**TIME.** — Probably about B. C. 1063. Two or three years after the last lesson. There is no way of ascertaining the exact date.**PLACE.** — The upper part of the valley of Elah, which extended from the Philistine country beyond Gath, southeasterly to the hills near Hebron. The exact spot was near Shochoh, at a place called Ephes-dammin, or, "the boundaries of blood," probably because here frequently met and fought the parties to the border warfare between the Philistines and Israelites. It was fourteen or fifteen miles southwest of Jerusalem, and nine or ten from Bethlehem.**SAUL.** — Still king of Israel, and **SAMUEL**, the prophet at Ramah.**DAVID**, perhaps twenty years old; his home in Bethlehem.**PICTURES.** — David Killing Goliath. — *M. Angelo, in Sistine Chapel.* Death of Goliath. — *Unknown artist.* David Triumphs. — *Jan Livens.* David Praising the Lord. — *Gerard Van Meire.* Triumph of David. — *Walter Roselle, Florence.***THE STRUCTURE OF THE STORY.** — This story, like others in this part of the history, is evidently composed of reports from different persons, as any one can see by careful reading. But the order of events is doubtless correct, for whosoever put them together in one continuous narrative would be likely to so arrange them that one part would not contradict another. Read the last three verses of chapter 16, as anticipatory, describing the final result, and not the immediate succession of events. This is continually done in our best modern histories.**PRONUNCIATIONS.** — E'lāh, Ek'rōn, E'phēs-dām'mīm, Gōlī'āth, Phil'istines, Shō'chō (Shō'kō).**EXPLANATORY.****I. The Battle Array.** In the fertile plains along the coast, southwest of the Israelites, lived the fierce and warlike race of the Philistines (from whom the name Palestine is derived). These people were often made God's instrument for the punishment of the sins of

his people. After Saul's disobedience it is said that "there was sore war against the Philistines all the days of Saul" (14: 52). "The mode of warfare pursued by them was of the guerilla description. They made a series of sudden raids on unprotected places for purposes of plunder. They seized some commanding position, which they strongly fortified, and from that they sent out bands of marauders to spoil the surrounding district." — *Taylor*.

At the time of this lesson their central camp was in the valley of Elah, near Shochoh. The hills on either side are seven hundred to eight hundred feet high, running nearly east and west. The valley below is three miles wide, but it grows narrower toward the east, till at the camping grounds of the Philistines "the opposite hills were only about a mile apart at their crests, but their slopes run out so far on each side that the wady is only 400 or 500 yards broad at their foot." — *Geikie*.

The Camping Ground.

Through the middle of the valley wound a ravine with steep sides, the bed of the winter torrents, "forming a natural defence to any force drawn up on either side of it." The Philistines were encamped on the southern slopes; and Saul had assembled an army of defence on the northern, with the valley between, and neither army dared to leave its position, and make an attack across the ravine, whose steep sides would give the enemy a great advantage.

II. Goliath, the Champion of the Philistines.

While the armies were in this position, within sight and speaking distance of each other across the ravine, there came out from the Philistine ranks a giant champion, who proposed that the Israelites should send forth a warrior to meet him, and have the whole battle decided by single combat. Compare the agreement between the Romans and Albans about the combat of the Horatii and Curiatii, *Classic Champions*. "that the nation whose citizens conquered in the combat should rule the other in peace (Livy, Vol. I., p. 24). Paris challenged Menelaus to decide the Trojan war by single combat (Homer's *Iliad*, Vol. III., 86 ff)." — *Cambridge Bible*.



Valley of Elah.

HIS RACE. The giant's name was Goliath of Gath. "He was not a Philistine strictly so termed, but was of the primeval race of the Anakim. It is remarkable that, to this day, the people of Beit Jibein, the modern Gath, justly reputed the most lawless and unscrupulous of all the inhabitants of the district, are of a stature far exceeding the ordinary, very many of them considerably exceeding six feet in height, and with heavy massive features and high cheek bones, very different from the ordinary Arab or Syrian types." — *Canon Tristram*.

HIS SIZE. His height was six cubits and a span. These measures varied greatly at different times and places, because the human limbs which were used as the standard differed in length. "But the *cubit*, the length from the elbow to the tip of the middle finger, is believed to be about one and one half feet, and the *span*, the distance from the thumb to the middle or little finger, when stretched apart to the full length, half a cubit, so that *nine cubits and a span* equal about *nine feet nine inches*." — *Cook*. Among parallel instances of gigantic stature may be quoted Pusio and Secundilla, who lived in the reign of Augustus, and are said by Pliny (*Nat. Hist.*, Vol. VII., p. 16) to have been over ten (Roman) feet high. Josephus says that a certain Jew, Eleazar, the giant who was sent to the emperor Tiberius, was seven cubits high. — *Cambridge Bible*. The bed of Og, king of Bashan, was nine cubits long. — *Cook*. Goliath's height was "hardly greater than that of the great-uncle of Iren, who came to Berlin in the year 1857." — *Keil*. Charles Birne, an Irishman, measured eight feet four inches; he died in 1783, aged twenty-two, and his skeleton, now in the College of Surgeons, London, is eight feet long. Patrick Cottar, another Hibernian, is said to have been eight feet seven and three fourths inches high. One of the guards of the Duke of Brunswick measured eight and one half feet; and a Swede in the celebrated grenadier guard of Frederick William I., of Prussia, stood eight and one half feet. — *Appleton's Cyclopædia*.

Tall Men in History.

HIS ARMOR. He stood resplendent in shining copper or bronze, often translated brass. Their brass or bronze was copper and tin. Our brass, copper, and zinc was unknown. "He was brass all over; note the kind of amused emphasis with which the word is repeated in the half-satirical and marvellously lifelike portrait of him in verses 5-8; brass here, brass there, brass everywhere; and, not content with one shield dangling at his back, he has a man to carry another in front of him as he struts." — *Maclaren*. The helmet, his brass head defence crowned with a crest or plume, if it were like the Egyptian helmets, "had the appearance of a row of feathers set in a jewelled tiara or metal band, to which were attached scales of the same material, for the defence of the back of the neck and the sides of the face." His body was defended by a *coat of mail* "made of metal scales, like those of a fish, whose defensive coat was, no doubt, imitated at a very early date by this warlike race, who dwelt on the seashore. This coat of mail, or corselet, was flexible, and covered the back and sides of the wearer." — *Ellicott*. This corselet weighed five thousand shekels, estimated at one hundred and fifty-seven pounds avoirdupois. A corselet of this kind, belonging to Rameses III., is in the British Museum. His legs were defended by *metal greaves* "fastened by leather thongs over the shins." Accompanying him was a man carrying a shield, large enough to defend his whole body, so that the giant could have the free use of both arms for attack. Compare Layard's *Nineveh*, Vol. II., p. 346, "The archers, whether on foot or in chariots, were accompanied by shield-bearers, whose office it was to protect them from the shafts of the enemy. The king was always attended in his wars by this officer." Ajax protects Teucer with his shield while he is shooting (Homer's *Iliad*, Vol. VIII., pp. 266-272). — *Cambridge Bible*.

ARMS. *First*, a javelin, or short bronze spear, to hurl at the enemy. This is called a "target" in verse 6. It was slung over his shoulders. *Second*, a heavy spear, the shaft of which was like a weaver's beam, and its head, (Heb.) "the flame of his spear," the metal part, which flashed like a flame, weighed six hundred shekels, or about nineteen pounds avoirdupois.

III. The Challenge. Thus armed and plumed, the giant stalked down into the valley, in sight of Saul's camp, and in a voice answering to his huge form defied the armies of Israel morning and evening for forty days. It "reminds us of De Bohun at Bannockburn, or of the Norman Taille-fer at Senlac." — *Geikie*. "His appearance struck dismay into Saul and all his people." No one dared to fight with this brilliant-armored giant; for no one could overcome him with the ordinary weapons of war. They were, however, comparatively safe, on account of the steep-sided ravine which lay between him and them. Had the giant attempted to cross this ravine, he would have been at a great disadvantage while climbing the steep bank.

IV. David Visits the Army. — A guiding Providence is plainly discerned in this story, the meaning of each part being unseen till the result showed the reason for every step. The significance of Providence is often written as with invisible ink, and cannot be read till the consummation is reached. The three oldest of David's brothers were in the army of Saul, only about ten miles from home, and Jesse, feeling anxious for news about them, sent David to the camp with some fresh provisions, for the soldiers there, as often in later wars, furnished their own supplies. It was the fortieth day of Goliath's challenge when David reached the camp, and heard his haughty words. He soon took in the state of affairs. His inquiries and comments brought upon him the rebuke of his oldest brother. But he kept on till his words came to the ears of Saul. All this, and his practice with the sling, and his conflict with the lion and the bear in previous days were necessary steps to his great victory.

V. The Israelites' Champion, David. — Vs. 38-40. It is well to mark the moral qualities which David manifests, and which make him a worthy champion, and without which he would either have failed altogether, or diminished the value of the victory.

FIRST. MEEKNESS AND SELF-GOVERNMENT are seen in his treatment of his elder brother's taunts.

SECOND. PERSEVERANCE is shown by his whole course in reference to the combat, overcoming every obstacle.

THIRD. COURAGE was shown in his destroying the lion and the bear which attacked his flock. These animals were common in Palestine in those days, and bears in some parts are still numerous. — *Ellicott*. The country was then well wooded, and afforded them shelter. They were fierce and strong, and the terror of the shepherds.

FOURTH. FAITH. The slaying of the lion and the bear was also a proof of faith, for the deeds were done at great personal risk, not as mere acts of daring, but in the performance of duty. The wild animals attacked the flock he was set to defend; and "the good

38. And Saul ^aarmed David with his ^barmor, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head; ^calso he ^aarmed him with a coat of mail.

39. And David girded his sword upon his ^barmor, and he assayed to go; for he had not proved *it*. And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved *them*. And David put them off him.

40. And he took his ¹staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in ^da shepherd's bag which he had, even in ^ea scrip; and his sling *was* in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine.

¹ Judg. 3: 31; 7: 16-20; 15: 15, 16; 20: 16.
¹ Cor. 1: 27-29.

Rev. Ver.: *a* clad. *b* apparel. *c* and. *d* the. *e* his.

shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." The consciousness of duty strengthened him. He acknowledges that it was God who gave him the strength and courage. And because God had given him strength to do that duty, he was confident that the same God would give him the strength and skill to perform this harder and more dangerous task. David also knew that God had given him great agility and great skill with the only weapon then known which could overthrow the giant. He could easily outrun the armored giant, or dodge his spear, and could attack from a distance. He was much safer than any of Saul's armored warriors. David's faith had a good foundation, for he knew that God had given him natural endowments, and had enabled him to be faithful in his training for his duty against many a temptation to ease and neglect.

FIFTH. HUMILITY, in that he made no parade of his courage, but attributed his success to the God in whom he trusted. He told the facts in the simplicity of truth; and both the fact of his telling and the method were marks of the absence of self-consciousness and egotism. "It does not appear that he even penned one psalm to celebrate this great event."

SIXTH. WISDOM. David showed the wisdom and manliness of true piety in his interview with the king. It is not strange that Saul should hesitate to permit a young and unknown man to accept a challenge on which the safety of the whole army depended. But he was convinced by two arguments, (1) what God had already done through him, and (2) by seeing that David's plan of attack was the only feasible one.

SEVENTH. GOOD COMMON SENSE was shown in his choice of weapons, and his manner of doing it.

DAVID'S WEAPONS. 38. And Saul armed David with his armor: rather *apparel*. Probably a special military dress adapted to be worn with armor. — *Cambridge Bible*. This was better for wearing under armor than was David's shepherd dress. Over it was placed the helmet of brass and the coat of mail.

39. And he assayed to go: endeavored to go, but he found this armor a hindrance rather than a help. By making the attempt David showed his courtesy and deference to his superiors. An actual trial of the armor showed the king that David could do nothing in that way. **For I have not proved them.** He had not used such things enough to be able to use them effectively. He did not object to the use of the means, but desired the best means, those which he could use effectively. Saul's armor was not only useless to David, but it prevented him from using the weapons with which he had skill. He then put on his simple and easy shepherd's dress, which gave him full play for his activities.

40. He took his staff in his hand. His usual weapon of defence. Eastern shepherds still frequently carry them. And chose him five smooth stones. They were smooth, so that they would fly the more swiftly and accurately at the mark; and five, so that if one failed others would be at hand. **Out of the brook:** which ran into the main ravine of the valley of Elah. He could not yet reach the ravine running between the two armies. **And put them in a shepherd's bag . . . a scrip.** A small bag or wallet made of the skins of kids stripped off whole and tanned, in which were carried food and other things. — *Kitto*. **And his sling was in his hand.** The sling of the ancient Egyptians, which probably was of the same sort as that of David, was a thong of leather, or string, plaited, broad at the middle, and having a loop at one end, by which it was fixed upon and firmly held by the hand; the other extremity terminated in a lash, which escaped from the fingers when the stone was thrown, and when used, the slinger whirled it two or three times round his head to steady it and to increase the impetus. — *Kitto*. The sling was a very formidable weapon in a skilled hand. It is also a most ancient weapon, used by the Egyptians and some-

Skill with the Sling.

41. And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield *went* before him.

42. And when the Philistine looked about, and saw David, he disdained ¹ him: for he was *but* a youth, and ruddy,² ³and of a fair countenance.

43. And the Philistine said unto David, *Am* ³ I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods.

44. And the Philistine said ⁴ to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field.

¹ Psal. 123: 3, 4. ² 1 Cor. 1: 27, 28.

³ 1 Sam. 24: 14. ⁴ 2 Sam. 3: 8. ⁵ 2 Kings 8: 13.

⁶ 1 Sam. 16: 12.

⁷ 1 Kings 20: 10, 11.

Rev. Ver.: *f* and *withal*.

times by the Romans. "Some men had wonderful skill with it. Seven hundred left-handed Benjaminites could sling at a hair's-breadth, and not miss. There is a well-known story that the women of the Balearic Islands used to put the bread for their boys high up in a tree, and to make them bring it down by slinging. Livy speaks of slingers so expert that they could send stones from a distance through an ordinary chaplet or wreath, and not only could strike their enemies in the face, but in whatever part of the face they 'chose.'" — *F. Johnson*. Leadens plummets were sometimes thrown from the sling by the Greeks, who often added insult to injury by inscribing them with some such word as ΑΓΩΝΙΣΤΗ, "Contend against this," or ΔΕΞΑΙ, "Take this." — *Kitto*. David had gained his skill by seeking to perform perfectly the daily duties of caring for sheep and defending them against wild beasts and robbers. Geikie says, "He guided his flock by his sling, as is still done in Palestine." It was a true stroke of military genius in David, this determination of his to fight only with the weapons with which he was familiar. It has been well said he was like one armed with a rifle, while his enemy had only a spear and a sword. — *Ellicott*. The giant was open to attack only on the forehead; but then he was cased in such heavy armor that he could not move with swiftness, and so he could prove a formidable foe only when he was fighting at close quarters. David, on the other hand, was free, and could run with swiftness and agility; while using the sling he could begin the attack from a distance, and out of the range of his adversary's weapons. So far, therefore, as weapons were concerned, the advantage was clearly on David's side, provided only he could preserve his precision of aim and steadiness of hand. — *Wm. M. Taylor*.

VI. **The Attack.** — Vs. 41-47. From the north David descended in his shepherd dress to the plain.

41. And the Philistine came on. In his shining armor, with "his dreadful clanking tramp under the hundredweight of metal." They either stood, one on either side of the narrow ravine while they were talking, or, as Conder suggests, they walked down the stream on either bank, conversing as they went.

42. And when the Philistine . . . saw David, he disdained him: he looked contemptuously upon the youth, armed with a stick, as if he were intending only to drive away a dog from his sheep. He probably did not notice his sling. His appearance and weapons seemed an insult to the man of war, whose mailed corselet alone weighed as much as David.

There is a legend among the Jews that when Goliath cast his eyes upon David, the sight seemed so ridiculous, so amusing, that he threw back his head, and laughed out aloud. But this action threw his brazen helmet away from his temples, and just then the smooth stone from David's sling struck upon his forehead. It is quite possible that his contempt for his opponent made him careless of his armor. Compare the vulnerable heel of Achilles.

43. Cursed David by his gods. "The little 'g' is too large, for an idol is 'nothing in the world.'" — *President Warren*. These gods were such as Dagon, Baal, and Astarte. The combat thus became a question not merely between David and Goliath, but between God and idols. If Goliath was successful, then idolatry would gain stronger hold of the people. Calvin, in his comments on the 73d Psalm, quotes the story of Dionysius the Less, who, having sacrilegiously plundered a temple, and having sailed safely home, said: "Do you see that the gods smile upon sacrilege?"

44. I will give thy flesh, etc. It was with such threats as these that Homer's heroes used to defy one another. For example, Hector's threat in the *Iliad*, XIII., 831, 2. — *Keil*. Such defiance by single combatants are still usual in the wars of the Bedouins. —

45. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a ^s shield: but I ¹ come to thee in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, ^h whom thou hast defied.

46. This day will the LORD deliver thee into mine hand; and I will smite thee, and take thine head ¹ from thee; and I will give the carcasses of the hosts of the Philistines this day unto the fowls of the air, and to the wild beasts of the earth; that ² all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel.

47. ¹ And all this assembly shall know that the LORD saveth ³ not with sword and spear: for the battle ⁴ is the LORD's, and he will give you into our ^k hands.

48. And it came to pass, when the Philistine arose, and came and drew nigh to meet David, that David ¹ hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine.

49. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang *it*, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, ^m that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth.

50. So David prevailed ^s over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; *but there was no sword in the hand of David.*

¹ 2 Sam. 22: 33, 35. Psa. 124: 8;

125: 1. 2 Cor. 10: 4. Heb. 11: 33, 34.

² Josh. 4: 24. Isa. 52: 10. 1 Kings

8: 43.

³ Psa. 44: 6, 7. Hos. Rev. Ver.:

1: 7. Zech. 4: 6.

⁴ 2 Chron. 20: 15.

⁵ 1 Sam. 21: 9.

^g javelin. ^k which.

ⁱ from off. ^j And that all

^k hand. . . may.

ⁱ hastened. ^m and the stone

sank.

Buckhardt. It is still usual in India to insult an enemy for the purpose of provoking a fight. — *Roberts.*

45. Then said David to the Philistine. David gave all the glory to God. He was fighting in God's cause, and for God's glory, more than for his own.

46. The Lord (Jehovah) of hosts. The hosts of angels in heaven, and of men on earth, all forces and powers, organized to do his will.

47. The Lord saveth not with sword and spear. Brute force does not rule in this world. There is a power mightier than earthly weapons. At the same time David used the weapons he had learned in the path of duty to handle with skill. Like Cromwell's soldiers, who "trusted in God and kept their powder dry." No amount of dependence on God will supersede the necessity of using the means God has placed in our power. There is no real faith without works. But all the smooth stones in Palestine would have been of no avail, unless God had guided their flight to the one small undefended spot on a man moving in haste.

VII. The Victory. — Vs. 48-51. 48. David hasted and ran, giving impetus to his sling.

49. David . . . took thence a stone, and slang it. "On wings of faith and prayer the smooth stone took its fatal flight." And smote the Philistine in his forehead. The stone either entered at a point unprotected by the helmet, or it may even have penetrated and passed through the helmet itself. — *Prof. W. H. Green.* And he fell (Psa. 27: 2).

"One struggle of might, and the giant of Gath,
With a crash like the oak in the hurricane's path,
And a clangor of arms, as of hosts in a fray,
At the feet of the stripling of Ephratah lay."

50. Smote the Philistine, and slew him. The actual slaying of the Philistine is spoken of by anticipation in this verse. The stone stunned him, and felled him to the earth, but his life was not yet extinct. — *Professor Green.*

51. ^a Therefore David ran, and stood ^o upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines ^p saw their champion was dead, ¹ they fled.

¹ Heb. 11: 34.

Rev. Ver.: ⁿ Then. ^o over. ^p saw that.

51. Stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword . . . and slew him. Goliath was slain by his own sword, as Haman was hung upon his own gallows. David must have been strong as well as brave to wield so great a weapon,

"The sword that seemed fit for archangel to wield,
Was light in his terrible hand."

When the Philistines saw their champion fall, they fled in dismay. The Israelites, aroused and inspired by what God had done through David, their faith kindled anew into flame, arose and shouted and pursued the Philistines, even to their own walled cities.

"Then a shout like the roll of artillery rose,
And the armies of Israel swept on their foes."

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

For an illustration of David's continual reliance on God as his distinguishing quality, see "A Piece of Possible History," in E. E. Hale's *Man Without a Country, and Other Tales*.

Jacox's *Secular Annotations on Scripture Texts*, series 1, pp. 139-143, has some excellent remarks on Eliab's disdain of his younger brother. Thompson's *Land and Book*, new edition, Vol. I., p. 231, on Saul's failure to recognize David; p. 237, on the use of the sling; p. 229, on the valley of Elah.

For modern applications, see Newton's *The Giants and How to Fight Them* (R. Carter), and *The Giant-Killer*, by A. L. O. E. (R. Carter); Spurgeon's *Types and Emblems*, "David's First Victory"; Spurgeon's *Sermons*, series 10, "The Lion-Slayer and Giant-Killer."

Motley's *Dutch Republic*, Vol. II., pp. 558-578, contains an excellent parallel of a strange providential victory. For examples of champions see *Iliad*, III., 340, Paris and Menelaus; VII., 206, Ajax and Hector. *Livy*, I., 23, the Horatii and Curiatii.

LESSONS FOR TO-DAY.

1. Oh! how little we know what may be before us, on some morning that dawns on us just as other days, but which is to form a great crisis in our life. How little the boy that is to tell his first lie that day thinks of the serpent that is lying in wait for him! Is it not a good habit, as you kneel each morning, to think, "For aught I know, this may be the most important day of my life. The opportunity may be given me of doing a great service in the cause of truth and righteousness. O God, be not far from me this day; prepare me for all that thou preparest for me!" — *Blaikie*.

2. The great fight of life is a contention between the material and the spiritual. Goliath represents the material; he is towering in stature, vast in strength, terrible in aspect. David represents the spiritual: he is simple, trustful, reverent; the merely fleshly side of his power is reduced to the lowest possible point. — *Joseph Parker*.

3. There are two kinds of giants for us to fight.

FIRST. Those in our own hearts, — as Temper, Appetite, Passion, Pride, Envy, Selfishness, Indolence, Worldiness, Unbelief.

SECOND. Those in the world around us, — as Intemperance, Irreligion, Vice, Dishonesty, Intolerance, Worldliness.

4. They are boastful, self-confident, incased in armor, defiant, strong. Worldly power and numbers are on their side. They are entrenched in sinful human nature, in the wealth and customs of the world. No merely human power can overthrow them.

5. Faithfulness in humble, daily duties is the preparation for the greater works of life.

6. We should not be discouraged because our relatives, or other older people, have no faith in our ability, but in humble perseverance keep on till we prove it by results.

7. The great danger that besets the Christian is that of attempting to fight with the world's weapons. The worldling will always overcome him when he does so, because the

Christian in such armor is not at home. He cannot use it unscrupulously, as the worldling does; and the moment he undertakes to employ it he seals his own defeat.

8. There is room for originality and individuality in methods of Christian warfare.

9. Every person can do best with the weapons with which he is most familiar and has the most skill. If we are to overcome the giants, it will be by accustoming ourselves to the use of the sword of the Spirit in daily life. It is too late when the giant attacks us to learn the use of our weapons.

10. The lesser victories prepare us for the greater. We must conquer the lion and the bear before we can have assurance of victory over the giants. Every victory of Christ over the enemies of the truth is an assurance of his final triumph.

11. The qualities we need are like those of David, — diligence, faithfulness, meekness, humility, courage, piety, perseverance, activity, good sense, faith in God.

12. The best defence is attack. Like the Roman general who saved Rome by carrying the war into Africa.

13. The victory comes through the use of means in reliance on the help of God in the path of duty. Only God can give the victory, but he gives it through the wisest and best means.

"For the God of David still
Guides the pebble at his will."

14. The weapons of the wicked are often turned against themselves, as Goliath was slain by his own sword. So the efforts to overthrow the Bible have strengthened it. The world's commerce carries Bibles and missionaries, which will renovate the world. Even wars have been compelled to aid religion.

15. Scott says, "In David's victory over the champion of the Philistines we may see a faint shadow of the Redeemer's victory over Satan, who, for ages, has defied the armies of the living God, and, from the fall of Adam to the coming of Christ, found no one able in his own strength to stand against him."

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

This lesson is always interesting. Make the scenes vivid, but do not fail to impress the practical lessons.

SUBJECT: MODERN GIANTS, AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM.

The story is so picturesque that very little help is needed from outside illustrations. The conflict of David with Goliath illustrates and is illustrated by the early conquest of Christianity, the Reformation, the progress of almost every Christian denomination, the Puritans, the cause of temperance, the conquests of missions.

Exceedingly interesting illustrations are referred to in the *Library References*, from Motley's *Dutch Republic*, where is described the relief of Leyden after the Spaniards had derisively said to the citizens, "As well can the Prince of Orange pluck the stars from the sky as bring the ocean to the walls of Leyden for your relief"; and from Edward Everett Hale's wonderful comparison of Homer and David singing alternately to the Philistine soldiers.

LESSON XI.—DECEMBER 15.

DAVID AND JONATHAN.—I SAMUEL 20: 32-42.

Golden Text.—*There is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*—Prov. 18: 24.

THE SECTION includes chapters 18, 19, and 20.

TIME.—B.C. 1062, beginning at the time David conquered Goliath and continuing the story for about a year.

PLACE.—(1) Royal palace at Gibeah, four miles north of Jerusalem, and (2) the stone Ezel (departure) in a field near Gibeah.

SAUL.—Now about fifty-three years old, having been king thirty-three years according to the common chronology, or thirteen years, according to Keil and others.

DAVID.—Aged twenty-one to twenty-three years. His home for a year had been in the royal court of Saul. He became a captain in the army, with one thousand soldiers under his command, and married Saul's daughter Michal, becoming son-in-law to the king.

JONATHAN.—The son of Saul, and natural heir to the throne, perhaps thirty-five years old.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—The description of love in 1 Corinthians 13; the measure of love, Luke 6: 35; Ephesians 5: 2; the duty of love, Romans 12: 9, 10, 15, 16; Galatians 5: 13, 14, 22; Ephesians 5: 2.

PICTURES.—Saul casting his javelin at David. — *Dord.* David's escape. — *Dord.*

PRONUNCIATIONS.—E'zél; Gib'éäh; Nā'ïöth; Rā'mäh.

EXPLANATORY.

I. The Covenant of Friendship.—We have seen in the last two lessons some of David's schools and schoolmasters, which were preparing him for his great lifework. We now come to one of a different kind, which had a powerful moulding influence upon his character. For the happy, joyful, triumphant, *David's Schools of Discipline.* heavenly lessons are as essential to our discipline as are the stern and hard experiences. Like the lamps in the tomb of Terentia, of which Jeremy Taylor speaks as burning only when in the tomb, but going out in darkness when brought into the upper air, the soul which lives always in sorrow lives as in a tomb. It needs also the heavenly joys to fit it for heaven.

The lesson for to-day is a most interesting and almost romantic section of David's history, in which we can delightfully trace the workings of God's guiding providence, as he leads a young man upward toward his life's work. The friendship of David with Jonathan was linked in many ways to his earlier life, for it could not have existed without what David had grown to be and had done; and but for these things he never could have met the king's son in a way which would make such a friendship possible. On the other hand, this friendship was the means of saving his life, of elevating his character, of helping him to be loyal to his king, even when that king sought his life. It furnished him with bright, cheerful, hopeful, comforting influences amid the long, harsh discipline of the several following years, and it helped to pave the way to David's acceptance by the people as Saul's successor. The friendship of Jonathan and David was one of the most perfect and beautiful ever known. "The soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David"; their souls were interwoven together; "and Jonathan loved him as his own soul."

"Two souls with but a single thought;
Two hearts that beat as one."

David, in his touching lament over his friend slain on Mt. Gilboa, exclaims, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan: very pleasant hast thou been unto me; thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women" (2 Sam. 1: 26).

"The heroic companions celebrated by Homer and others seem to have but one heart and soul, with scarcely a wish or object apart, and only to live, as they are always ready to die, for one another. . . . The idea of a Greek hero seems not to have been thought complete without such a brother in arms by his side." — *Thirlwall's History of Greece.* It is probable that Jonathan became acquainted with David some three years before our lesson opens, when David, just secretly anointed by Samuel, was first summoned to court to charm away the evil spirit from the king by his skill in music and song (16: 14-23). *Begining of the Friendship.* This acquaintance was of short duration; but when David had shown his noble qualities and his lofty faith by his victory over Goliath, then the soul of Jonathan was drawn to David. The two friends made a covenant of friendship together, perhaps like the ancient blood covenants, wherein each friend transfuses his blood into the other's veins. "The author of Anastasius mentions an oath of brotherhood, pledging life for life, as sometimes taken by young men among the modern Greeks." — *Jenks.*

II. The Friendship Sealed.—Jonathan, the prince, took off his royal soldier garments, and gave them to David, together with his sword and "his famous bow, which was his special weapon" (2 Sam. 1: 22), and his princely girdle. "It has been suggested that the reason of this gift was to enable his friend David, then poorly clad, to appear at

his father's court in a fitting dress; but this kind of present was usual among friends in those remote ages. Glaucus and Diomed, for instance, exchanged armor of a very different value."

Now change we arms, and prove to either host
We guard the friendship of the line we boast.

For Diomed's brass arms, of mean device,

For which nine oxen paid (a vulgar price),
He gave his own of gold, divinely wrought:
A hundred beeves the shining purchase bought.
(*Iliad*, VI., 286-295.)—*Ellicott*.

"That an Eastern prince should give any ornament or robe from his own person is a mark of favour shown only very rarely. In Esther, Mordecai is to be clothed with the robe 'which the king useth to wear.' The Persian ambassador signed the treaty between his country and Russia in 1831, as the Lord of the **Exchanging Garments.** Dagger set in Jewels, of the Sword adorned with gems, and of the Shawlcoat already worn by the king; these having been royal gifts to him from the king's person. *Morier's Second Journey*, p. 299."—*Geikie*. "Edmund Ironside and Canute, the first Danish king, after long strife for the possession of England, made "peace by tween them, and confirmed other's apparel and arms, as their persons to each other, mund, and Edmund, Canute."

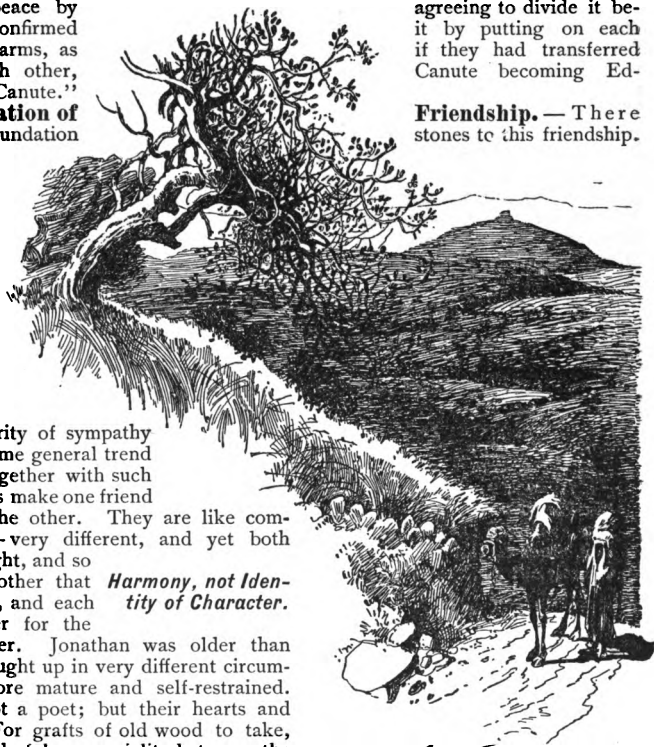
III. The Foundation of were two great foundation

FIRST. There was, and always must be essential similarity, with such differences as make it a harmony, not identity. Two friends must be set to the same key, and each note must harmonize with the others. They form two parts to the same tune. There must be large similarity of sympathy and principles, the same general trend and quality of life, together with such personal differences as make one friend the complement of the other. They are like complementary colors,—very different, and yet both formed by rays of light, and so adapted one to the other that **Harmony, not Identity of Character.** they belong together, and each is brighter and better for the presence of the other. Jonathan was older than David, had been brought up in very different circumstances, and was more mature and self-restrained. He was a soldier, not a poet; but their hearts and souls were one. "For grafts of old wood to take, there must be a wonderful congeniality between the trees."—*Archbishop Whateley*.

"Jonathan loved David as his own soul. And why? Because his soul was like the soul of David; because he was modest, he loved David's modesty; because he was brave, he loved David's courage; because he was virtuous, he loved David's virtue. He saw that David was all he was himself; and therefore he loved him as his own soul."—*Charles Kingsley*.

SECOND. There must be something strong and noble in each partner to the friendship. "It is only great-hearted men who can be true friends; mean and cowardly men can never know what friendship means."—*Charles Kingsley*. There must be something worthy of love before we can obey Shakespeare's maxim:—

Friendship.—There stones to this friendship.



Gibeah.

Worth in Both Parties.

"The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel."

There is always something in each friend to which the other can look up. Each finds the other his superior in some things; and it is this conscious deficiency in himself, joined with an appreciation of the opposite quality and a longing to possess it, that binds friends together.

"With a love that shall not die
Till the sun grows cold,

And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment day unfold."

WHAT WORTH JONATHAN COULD FIND IN DAVID. It is worthy of special notice that it was when David's worth shone resplendent in his victory over Goliath that Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David. David was very attractive in his person: he was accomplished in music and song; he was a courtier; he was faithful; he was courageous even to heroism; he "behaved himself wisely in all *David's Character*. his ways"; he had great common sense and tact; he was large hearted and generous; and above all, he had "a sublime faith, a perfect, childlike trust in the glorious arm of the Lord." He was a good general, and had in him the elements of a great statesman. His character was a harp of many strings. "His is the widest character on record. In Holy Writ, Moses, Elijah, and Paul; in profane history, Solon, Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, Napoleon, and others excelled David in one quality or another. But David presents a greater number of distinct and striking features than any one of those great men; and that is why I style him the widest character on record — a shepherd, a soldier, a courtier, a famous friend, a fugitive, an actor, a marauder, a general, a king, a statesman, an exile, a priest, a prophet, a saint, a criminal, a penitent; and nothing by halves." — *Charles Reade*.

WHAT DAVID COULD FIND IN JONATHAN. On the other part, Jonathan, too, was a brave and noble soldier, and had accomplished some very daring feats of arms. Alone with his armor-bearer, he had captured a mountain fortress of the Philistines (14: 1-15). He had a most magnanimous nature, loving and defending his brother-in-law David, even when he knew that he would take his place as heir of the kingdom (23: 17). "One feature of the friendship of Jonathan and David had no parallel in classic times, — it was friendship between two men of whom the younger was a most formidable rival to the older." — *Blaikie*. In Jonathan unselfishness was more prominent than in any other Old Testament character. He was "the Golden Rule exemplified." Without the genius and versatile talents of David he was larger hearted, and had a most wonderful capacity for loving. *Jonathan's Character*.

"Its holy flame forever burneth;
From heaven it came, to heaven returneth."

Jonathan shows the same piety and trust in God which David possessed. Jonathan's noble character is also shown by his devotion to his unfortunate father. "To him, if to any one, the frenzy of the king was amenable." "Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan" (19: 6). He was almost a model son.

IV. *The Friendship Tested.* — Vs. 32-40. The year following the covenant of love with Jonathan, as well as the six succeeding ones, was a year of severe discipline to David. "A court, and especially an Eastern court, is a perilous place for a young and untried man," and most of all for one with the popular qualities of David. But God used this period of trial as one means of saving David from the threatening dangers. He was safe because God was with him, and he kept close to God. The army had not returned from the great victory begun by the fall of Goliath, when Saul's jealousy and every evil, selfish passion were inflamed by the sight of the women and maidens, who had gone forth, doubtless in holiday attire, to meet the victorious soldiers, "singing the praises of their favorite as they danced before the advancing column, to the music of tambourines and cymbals." "Saul," they sang, "has slain his thousands, but David his tens of thousands." Saul was sometimes troubled by an evil spirit, which wrought him up to an insane frenzy of evil passion. David still sought to soothe him with his music; but the king grew envious of him, for the very reason that David was so good and God so manifestly with him (18: 28). He hated David, and tried in various ways to kill him. Five separate attacks are mentioned in chapters 18 and 19. When Saul learned that his daughter Michal loved the young hero, he used even this love as a means of destroying David, requiring him to kill one hundred Philistines as his dowry, hoping he would perish in the attempt. But this turned to David's advantage, by making him son-in-law to the king. Michal at one time saved David's life by putting a

32. And Jonathan answered Saul his father, and said unto him, Wherefore ^ashall he be slain? what hath he done?

33. And Saul cast ^ba javelin at him to smite him: whereby Jonathan knew that it was determined of his father to ^cslay David.

34. So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger, and did eat no meat the second day of the month: for he was grieved for David, because his father had done him shame.

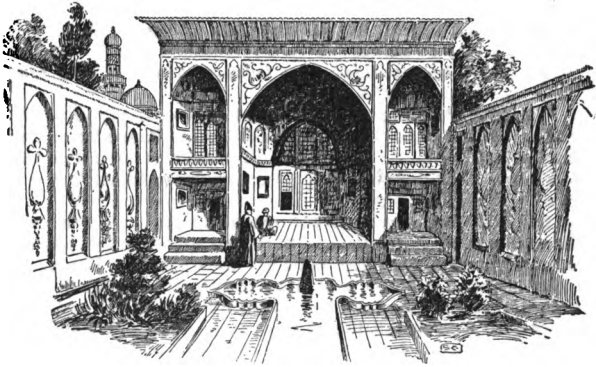
35. And it came to pass in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad with him.

36. And he said unto his lad, Run, find ^dout now the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him.

37. And when the lad was come to the place of the arrow which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried after the lad, and said, *Is* not the arrow beyond thee?

Rev. Ver. : *a* should he be put to death. *b* his spear. *c* put David to death. *d* omit out.

household image in his bed in his place, while he escaped to the aged prophet Samuel in Ramah. Here he was placed in the school of the prophets at Naioth, a part of Ramah. But Saul learned of his retreat, and he could no longer remain there. David therefore appealed to Jonathan to help him. On the next day was to be held the usual festival of the new moon (Num. 10: 10; 28: 11-15), and David was expected to be present. But it was not safe for him to go. But Jonathan at this feast was to make excuses to Saul for David's absence, and thus learn how Saul felt; and then make known to David the state of affairs by a signal. Saul missed David from the feast, and was insanely angry at Jonathan for making excuses for him. The verses of the lesson begin with Jonathan's reply to his father.



Court of a Persian Palace.

32. **What hath he done?** He was good, while Saul was bad. He was to become king, while Saul was rejected and Jonathan with him. So long as David lived and did well, there was no hope that Jonathan would succeed his father. And the better David was, the less was Saul's hope.

33. **And Saul, in his ungoverned anger, cast a javelin, a small spear, at him, his own son and heir, for whose sake he wanted to kill David.**

34. **So Jonathan arose from the table in fierce anger.** It was not the anger of passion, for he did not try to injure his father, but the anger of indignation, of grief, and of wounded love and respect. **And did eat no meat.** He left the feast, and his feelings were too strong to let him eat. In quiet thought he could grow calm.

35. **Jonathan went out into the field, where David was hidden behind the rock Ezel, in the country not far from the capital, Gibeah. At the time appointed with David.** As it might not be safe for Jonathan to be seen going to David's hiding-place, they had agreed upon a signal by which David, unseen, could learn the state of things at the court. Jonathan was to take a boy out into a field near David's hiding-place, and shoot with bow and arrows as at a mark, sending the boy after the arrows. If he shouted to the lad, so that the concealed David could overhear, "Behold, the arrows are this side of thee," then it was safe for David to return. But if he shouted, "Is not the arrow beyond thee?" then David must haste away.

38. And Jonathan cried after the lad, Make speed, haste, stay not. And Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows, and came to his master.

39. But the lad knew not any thing: only Jonathan and David knew the matter.

40. And Jonathan gave his *artillery unto his lad, and said unto him, Go, carry *them* to the city.

41. And as soon as the lad was gone, David arose out of *a place* toward the south, and fell on his face to the ground, and bowed himself three times: and they kissed one another, and wept one with another, until David exceeded.

42. And Jonathan said to David, ¹ Go in peace, forasmuch as we have sworn both of us in the name of the LORD, saying, The LORD ² be between me and thee, and between my seed and thy seed forever. And he arose and departed: and Jonathan went into the city.

¹ 1 Sam. 1: 17.

Rev. Ver.: * weapons. f shall be.

38. Make speed, haste, stay not. These were said to the boy, but meant as an urgent warning to David.

40. Gave his artillery. So bows, and arrows, and other weapons were called long before the invention of firearms.

V. The Parting of the Friends. — Vs. 41, 42. 41. As soon as the lad was gone. So as not to carry a report to Saul. Kissed one another, as men do in the East. And wept. "Talk not of grief till thou hast seen the tears of warlike men." — *Mrs. Hemans*. David exceeded, "wept violently aloud," "was completely mastered by his grief," "he broke down."

42. The Lord be between me and thee. As a witness and avenger, if we keep not the covenant we have made of perpetual friendship. — *Bishop Patrick*. Jehovah was to be watchman, umpire, arbiter between Jonathan and David. He should be the Daysman, to lay his hand upon them both, to keep their covenant of love inviolate. — *Johnson*. And between my seed, etc. He looked forward to the time when David, as king, might be tempted to destroy Jonathan's sons as possible rivals and claimants of the throne. Or if Saul killed David, Jonathan would protect David's children. How David kept this covenant is related farther on in the history. They never met again, save once, a year or two later, in the wilderness of Ziph, when David was pursued by Saul. Then Jonathan went out into the wilderness to comfort his friend, and "strengthened his hand in God" (23: 16). Read David's beautiful "Song of the bow," his lament over his dead friend (2 Sam. 1: 17-27).

NOTE concerning this friendship: (1) It was between persons of real worth and character. (2) It was formed and cemented by deep piety and devoted friendship to God. Only in the religious atmosphere and in supreme love to God can be found the deepest and most enduring friendship among men. (3) It was disinterested, unselfish. (4) It was mutually helpful. (5) It was a friendship in adversity as well as in prosperity. (6) It was faithful and constant to the end. True friendship never adores the rising sun, and turns its back on the setting.

Qualities of True Friendship.

VI. The Value of Friendship. 1. The highest friendship is very precious. "Oh, friendship! of all things most rare." — *John Lilly*. "All faithful friends went on a pilgrimage years ago, and none of them ever came back"; so wrote one of the Puritan divines, whose heart was depressed at the time, most likely. — *C. S. Robinson*. "Wretched, indeed, and probably deservedly wretched, is the man who has no friends." — *C. Kingsley*. "Whosoever is delighted only in solitude is either a wild beast or a god."

2. "Every man may learn from this story of Jonathan how to choose friends," for we have the right and power to choose who shall be our friends. "Choose friends, not for their usefulness, but for their goodness; not for their worth to us, but for their worth in themselves, and choose, if possible, people superior to ourselves." — *Kingsley*.

3. Friendship works two contrary effects; for it redoubleth joys, and cutteth griefs in half. — *Bacon's Essays*.

4. The highest friendship must be founded on mutual worth and respect.
5. It is disinterested and unselfish, "in honor preferring one another."
6. It must be cemented by the ties of religion. Only he who loves God first and most will love another as himself.
7. It must show itself in deeds; in mutual service.
8. One great advantage of friendship is its tendency to make a person like the one he loves. Even a good book uplifts the character; how much more a good friend! We feel

"His being working in my own,
The footsteps of his life in mine."

9. "Behold what gross errors and extreme absurdities many do commit for want of a friend to tell them of them." "Two eyes see more than one." A true friend answers Burns' wish:—

"Oh, wad some power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us
And foolish notion."

Friendship strengthens every good in a man. Two souls cemented together are far more than twice one. "A friend not only gives much needed counsel, but a man's friend bringeth his own thoughts to light, and whetteth his wits as against a stone, which itself cuts not. In a word, a man had better to relate himself to a statue or picture than to suffer his thoughts to pass in smother."—*Bacon*.

10. It cheers, and refreshes, and encourages the spirit.
11. The sincere love of any one person tends to universal good-will; the love of all. A candle shines not only on him who lights it, but on all within reach of its rays.
12. Friendship helps toward the love of God.
13. Friendship is kept and cherished by little acts of love, by mutual helpfulness, by dwelling on the virtues rather than the faults of friends, by mutual service in some noble cause, by love of God.
14. It is of the utmost importance to avoid false friendships and companionship with the bad. Every power for good in true friendship is a power for evil in the false.

VII. **Friendship with Jesus.**—The friendship of Jonathan and David teaches us lessons concerning the higher friendship with Jesus.

FIRST. We must be friends to him, as well as he to us. He loves us, whether we do him or not; but we are not friends unless we also love him, nor can we claim the benefits of that friendship.

SECOND. Friendship with Jesus is based on worth. We love him because he is so good, so noble, so pure, so lovable. And he finds something in the poorest and weakest of his disciples to love, and possibilities of greater worth; but only as they grow like him can there be the truest mutual friendship. John the lovable was "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

THIRD. Friendship with Jesus implies self-sacrifice. Jonathan cheerfully relinquished his hopes of his father's kingdom for his friend David. Jesus left his heavenly kingdom to come down to us, and he died upon the cross that we might be kings and priests in his Father's kingdom. We, on our part, are to show our love by sacrifices for him and his cause.

FOURTH. The tendency of friendship with Jesus is that we become like him. "We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." Meditating on his character and goodness, loving the good shining in his character, we are conformed to his image.

FIFTH. Friendship with Jesus is full of refreshment, courage, strength, and cheer.

SIXTH. It leads us to love all for whom he died and whom he loves.

SEVENTH. It will endure forever.

LIBRARY REFERENCES.

Charles Kingsley's *Gospel of the Pentateuch and David* is excellent. On friendship, Tennyson's *In Memoriam*; Trumbull's *The Blood Covenant*; Whately's *Annotations of Bacon's Essays*; Fuller's *Good Thoughts in Bad Times*, p. 350; Spencer's *Things New and Old*, Vol. II., p. 150; Thomas Arnold's *Sermons*, Vol. III., p. 7, "Christ the Friend." For familiar instances of noble friendship in classical literature, see the stories of Orestes and Pylades, *Foster's Cyclopædia of Illustrations*, Vol. II., p. 8879; Damon and Pythias, Vol. I., p. 2409; Epaminondas and Pelopidas, Vol. II., p. 8878; also of Theseus and Peirithous, and Achilles and Patroclus.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.

Include in the teaching this whole section of David's life and show the bearing of this friendship in unfolding David's character and preparing him for his work.

SUBJECT: THE FRIENDSHIP OF JONATHAN AND DAVID.

I. THE STORY OF THEIR FRIENDSHIP.

Illustration. Envy attempting to destroy those who trust in God is like the serpent in the fable gnawing a file. He saw the pile of chips, and imagined he was accomplishing something, till the increasing pain showed him that the chips were from his own teeth, while the file was unharmed.

II. THE FOUNDATION OF THEIR FRIENDSHIP.

Illustration. Some writer has said that those who would be best friends need a third object in which both are interested, and then, like radii of a circle, the nearer they come to this centre, the nearer they approach to one another. This object may be God himself, or any of the great moral causes which belong to God's kingdom.

III. THE TEST OF THEIR FRIENDSHIP (vs. 32-42).

Illustration. Paul Revere's Ride, by Longfellow, gives a good illustration of signalling in the time of our Revolution.

Illustration. In *Gotthold's Emblems* is an illustration of the danger of fickleness in friendship, drawn from a lute, which, having been exposed to the weather, became out of tune. A faithful friendship is like a well-tuned lute, full of sweet sounds. "Nothing, however, is sooner untuned than a lute, and nothing is more fickle than a human friend. The tone of the one changes with the weather, that of the other with fortune. With a clear sky, and a bright sun, and a gentle breeze, you will have friends in plenty; but let fortune frown, and the firmament be overcast, and then your friends will prove like the strings of the lute, of which you will tighten ten before you will find one which will bear the tension or keep the pitch."

IV. THE VALUE OF FRIENDSHIP.

Illustration. Bacon compares friendship to a pomegranate full of seeds.

Illustration from David's own history. Some years later than this friendship with Jonathan, there came into David's family another friend, of very similar name, but very different character. His name was Jonadab, and his story is told in the thirteenth chapter of 2d Samuel. David's son Amnon was tempted to commit a crime. He might have overcome, "but," saith the Scripture, "he had *A False Friend*, a friend," Jonadab, who aided him in the crime, instead of preventing him. A great deal of evil comes from false friendship. The danger is doubly great because it comes under the guise of friendliness,—a wolf in sheep's clothing. "Give me," says one, "a roaring devil, rather than a sleeping one; for a sleeping devil makes me slumber, but roaring ones provoke me to run to my master." How many young people are ruined by bad companionship! How large a part of drunkenness comes from the custom of social drinking! How many are kept away from Christ and heaven by fear of their friends! Beware of the Jonadab friendship, whose test is that it is willing to lead you or join you in sin.

V. FRIENDSHIP WITH JESUS. The highest and best of all. Illustrate its blessing, its nature, its conditions, and its power, from the story of the friendship of Jonathan and David.

LESSON XII.—DECEMBER 22.

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.—LUKE 2: 8-20.

Golden Text.—*Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy.*—LUKE 2: 10.

PICTURES.—There are not a few great pictures which illustrate this lesson, and copies of which, in the form of unmounted photographs, are inexpensive, but will add greatly to the interest of the lesson.

The well-known pictures of the Madonna and Child, by *Raphael*. The Annunciation to Mary, by *Guido Reni*, *Seifert*, and others. Holy Night, by *Correggio*. The Nativity,

by *Murillo*, *Hofmann*, and others. The Appearance of the Angels to the Shepherds, by *Ploekhorst*. Views of Bethlehem, and of the Place of the Appearance to the Shepherds, *taken from nature*.

HYMNS.—There are several most beautiful hymns which it would be a good thing if the scholars should learn by heart. Such as *Sears'* "It Came upon the Midnight Clear"; *Phillips Brooks'* "O Little Town of Bethlehem"; *Phillips Brooks'* "The Earth Has Grown Old with Its Burden of Care"; *Dix's* "As with Gladness Men of Old."

SUBJECT: THE REDEEMER THE WORLD NEEDS.

I. The Need of a Redeemer.—The moral state of the world was then and is now a proof of the need of a Saviour from sin. The moral condition of the Roman Empire, amid the glory of its military achievements that made Rome the mistress of the world; in the height of its intellectual supremacy, producing works which have aided the education of the world for eighteen centuries, and are still a part of the training of every educated person in Christendom; under the power of a law which is still the basis of civilized legislation; amid the triumphs of wealth and luxury,—is portrayed in the terrible indictment of Romans 1: 21-32, which the contemporary literature of the day fully confirms, as do the startling revelations from the ruins of Pompeii.

LITERATURE. See Uhlhorn's *Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism*; Fisher's *Beginnings of Christianity*; Farrar's story, *Darkness and Dawn*; Storrs' *Divine Origin of Christianity Indicated by Its Historical Effects*.

II. The Kind of Saviour We Need.—If we ask ourselves what we need in a real Saviour, we will find in the answer those things which all men need.

1. We need the forgiveness of sins; and the assurance from God as to the conditions on which they can be forgiven.

2. We need light upon the future, upon the certainty of a future life, upon heaven, its character, and the way to reach it.

3. We need a new heart, a disposition that loves what is right, to which goodness, purity, love, and all the virtues are natural.

4. We need every possible motive that can uplift and inspire us to live the right life,—hope, fear, love, duty, all in the strongest degree.

5. We need an example and guide, to show as by an actual life what our own possibilities are, and how we may reach them.

6. We need divine power, the Holy Spirit of God, as the wintry fields need the warm spring sun.

7. We need a divine Saviour, with all power to save, omnipresent, so far above us that we can always look up to him.

8. We need a human Saviour, who can sympathize with us, to whom we can draw near in personal love and friendship.

III. Jesus, Who Was Born in Bethlehem, Meets all These Wants.—He is "the way" to every one.

Sometimes those who have read the best things spoken by heathen writers, as those in the *Light of Asia* (which are transfused by the teachings of the *Light of the World*), or those in the *Parliament of Religions*, are tempted to feel that those lofty thoughts and occasional high ideas may be enough. Why teach them *Christ the Way*.

about Jesus? Because an ideal is not a Saviour. Because what is needed is not a picture of a good life, but a way to a good life; not a description of heaven, but a way to heaven; not an essay on God, but God present, helping, forgiving, a father, and friend. Because we need not some truth amid much error, but the truth clearly and distinctly made known.

ILLUSTRATION. A sick man in his chair, weak, all drawn with rheumatism; what he needs is not a description of the health he ought to possess, nor an athlete showing him the powers of human body. He first needs a physician who can cure him. Then the picture and the athlete can do him good.

IV. Jesus Came at the Best Time.—There has been no other time in the history of the world so perfectly adapted for the beginning of the Kingdom and the spreading of the news of salvation throughout the earth as that in which Christ was born. (1) It was after the Jews had received all that they would about God's kingdom, but before the breaking up and scattering of the nation by the fall of their capital and the temple. (2) There were many lands, but nearly all the world was subject to the one government at Rome, so

that the preachers of the gospel could travel in safety, and be protected in their work. Roman roads made for their legions were a highway for the gospel, and the Roman soldiers were a guard for its preachers. (3) The world was at peace, for almost the only time, so that the gospel could have free course. (4) The Greek language, the most perfect medium of human speech, was spoken everywhere with the native languages, so that the gospel could be heard and read by all. The conquests of Alexander, which diffused the Greek language, the Greek civilization, and Greek learning throughout the East, were a marvellous providential preparation for the gospel. (5) The Bible of the Jews had been translated into the Greek language in the third century before Christ. This version is called the *Septuagint*. Thus for some centuries the Greek language was being prepared to express the divine message to man. (6) The Jews had been dispersed through all lands, carrying the Old Testament, which bore witness to one God and held the prophecies of the Messiah. And they had established synagogues in almost every town, so that there was a place in which to preach the gospel, and a people who could easily be reached. (7) It was a time of great intellectual activity. It was an era of literature and learning. Moreover, according to Lecky (*History of European Morals*), there was a general disintegration of the old religions which gave neither righteousness nor hope in this world nor promise for the world to come. But nothing could quench the thirst for something higher and better. All this caused men to appreciate the great message of life and hope which Christianity was bringing to them.

The prophecies concerning the Christ fit into this time. The prophecy in Daniel pointed to this time. Jacob's prophecy concerning Judah, that he should be a nation till Shiloh came, could not be fulfilled much later, for the Jews were utterly dispersed A. D.

70. Then one of the strongest assurances that Jesus is the true Saviour from heaven is the fact that he comes as part of a great divine plan. He was foretold, promised, typified from the very beginning. There was a promise to Adam (Gen. 3: 15); to Abraham (Gen. 22: 18); to Jacob (Gen. 49: 10); to David (2 Sam. 7: 12-16); by Isaiah (9: 6, 7; 11: 1-9); by Daniel (9: 24, 25). The sacrifices typified him. More frequently still were foretold the blessed times he would bring.

V. Jesus Came in the Best Way. — Vs. 8-20.

PLACE. He was born at Bethlehem, the city of David, his royal ancestor.

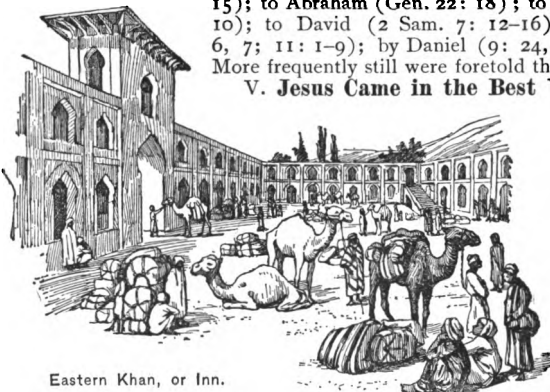
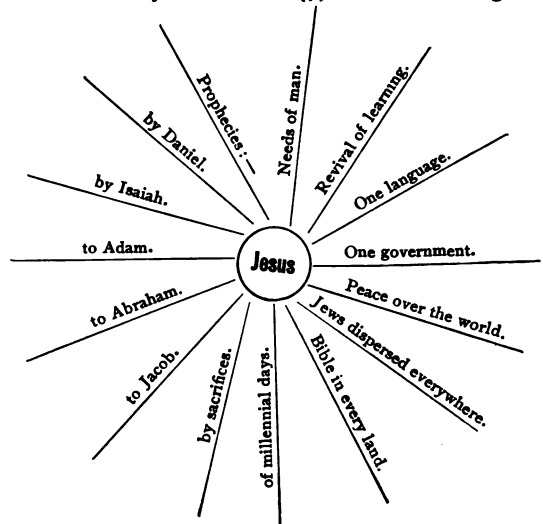
TIME. He was born about December, B. C. 5.

HIS FATHER was God.

HIS MOTHER was Mary, a descendant of David.

HIS BIRTH was at an inn, and he was laid in a manger.

HIS CIRCUMSTANCES were of humble life and honest toil, that he might be the friend of all men, but especially of the poor and suffering.



Eastern Khan, or Inn.

8. And there were ^a in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, ^b keeping watch over their flock by night.

9. ^c And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, ¹ and they were sore afraid.

10. And the angel said unto them, ^d Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, ² which shall be to all ^e people.

11. ³ For ^f unto you is born this day in the city of David ⁴ a Saviour, ⁵ which is Christ the Lord.

¹ Luke 1: 12.

² Gen. 12: 3. Matt. 28: 19.

³ Luke 24: 47. Col. 1: 23.

⁴ Isa. 9: 6. ⁵ Matt. 1: 21.

⁶ Matt. 16: 36; Luke 1: 43.

⁷ Acts 2: 36; 10: 36. Phil.

2: 11.

Rev. Ver.: ^a shepherds in the same country.

^b and keeping watch by night over.

^c and an angel of the Lord stood by them.

^d Be not afraid.

^e the people.

^f there is born to you this.

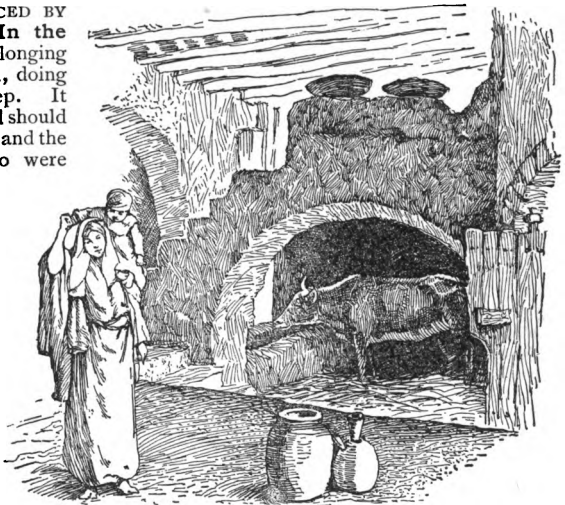
HIS COMING WAS ANNOUNCED BY THE ANGELS (vs. 8-14). 8. In the same country, in the fields belonging to Bethlehem. **Keeping watch**, doing their duty faithfully to the sheep. It was fitting that the Good Shepherd should be first announced to shepherds; and the Faithful and True to those who were faithful in their calling.

9. **And, lo, the angel**, not "the," but "an" angel, of the Lord, one sent from heaven, came upon them. The word does not signify that the angel stood above them. It is our (French) *survenir*, to come unexpectedly. — *Godet*. It indicates a sudden but actual appearance. The angels had great interest in the coming of Jesus. The joy they feel "over one sinner that repenteth" must have been intensified and multiplied, as they saw in him the coming redemption of the world. **And the glory of the Lord**. The radiant brightness which in all ages has been the best symbol and manifestation of God's nature, expressing wisdom, love, power, purity, mystery, eternity, omnipresence. This accompanied the angel, and showed him to be the authorized divine messenger. **And they were sore afraid**. Literally, *feared a great fear*. The universal consciousness of sin and of unfitness for the eternal world makes all mankind afraid of any unexpected disclosure of the spiritual world or revelation of the nearness of God. — *Abbott*.

10. **And the angel said . . . Fear not**. The glad tidings of a Saviour, bringing light and love, a Father in heaven, and forgiveness of sins, can alone take away all fear from the soul. **I bring you good tidings of great joy**. The best tidings the world ever heard. (See v. 14.) **To all people**. To all ages, all nations, all classes, all colors. The gospel is the universal religion, as broad as the human race. And the joy is more intense to each one because it is for all.

11. **For unto you is born . . . a Saviour**. One who should save them from their sins, their worst and most dangerous enemies. "Jesus" means Saviour. **Christ**. "The Anointed One," the Messiah, whom they had long been hoping and praying for. He is called "Anointed" because he had been divinely set apart for this work, as kings and high priests were set by anointing with oil.

NOTE the three names of Christ as expressing three great truths of our salvation.



A Peasant's Home, with its Manger, in Palestine.

12. And this ^g shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find ^h the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, ⁱ lying in a manger.

13. And ¹ suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

14. Glory to ² God in the highest, and on earth ³ ¹ peace, good ⁴ will toward men.

¹ Gen. 28: 12; 32: 1, 2. Psa. 103: 20, 21. Heb. 1: 14.

² Isa. 57: 19. Luke 1: 79. Rom. 5: 1. Eph. 2: 17. Col. 1: 20.

Rev. Ver.; ^g is the sign.

^h a babe. ⁱ and lying.
^j a peace among men in whom he is well pleased.

³ Luke 19: 38. Eph. 1: 6; 3: 20, 21. Rev. 5: 13.

⁴ John 3: 16. Eph. 2: 4, 7.

12. And this shall be a sign unto you, that the words spoken were true; and a guiding sign, like the sign to the wise men, showing how they might know what child was the one referred to. **Ye shall find the babe** ("a" babe).

13. And suddenly, as if revealed by a flash of lightning. **A multitude of the heavenly host**, an organized army. Joining with the first angel to show the interest all heaven has in the coming of the Saviour. "The angels are often represented as a body-guard of the Lord." Thus in Raphael's famous Madonna and Child, the whole space around is filled with angel faces. So when the eyes of Elisha's servant were opened, he saw the air full of chariots and horses of fire. **Praising God.** Even the angels could find nothing more worthy of praise than God's love in the salvation of men, his wisdom in planning the way, and his power in accomplishing his purpose. The song consists of two strains:—

1. GLORY TO GOD IN HEAVEN.
2. PEACE, GOOD-WILL TO MEN ON EARTH.

Still through the cloven skies they come,
With peaceful wings unfurled;
And still their heavenly music floats
O'er all the weary world:

Above its sad and lowly plains
They bend on hovering wing,
And ever o'er its Babel sounds
The blessed angels sing.

—Sears.

FIRST STRAIN. 14. **Glory to God**, expressing both the *fact* that God is glorious in the work of salvation, and the *feeling* that would utter and make known his glory. The first thought of the angels, as of all good men, is God's glory. **In the highest.** (1) *In the highest strains.* Only the most exquisite music and song is worthy to express this theme. (2) *In the highest heavens.* The glory shines and the praise sounds to the highest heavens. It is the noblest song and the brightest glory even there. (3) *In the highest degree.* The plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, so infinitely wise, so infinitely loving, manifests God's glory more than all the wonders of creation, "when all the sons of God shouted for joy." For the souls of the saved shall "shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars for ever and ever"; even when the stars are faded, and the heavens shall be no more.

SECOND STRAIN. **And on earth peace**, including all welfare and blessing, here and hereafter. This is a strange song to be heard amid the wars and contentions of earth, and the discordant tumults of the human heart, restless as the sea. Yet Jesus has brought peace to the earth,—peace between man and God, resulting in peace between man and man, and the soul's peace with itself and with its surroundings, and with the law of God,—peace such as the world cannot give and the world cannot take away. This peace is the fruit of the gospel in each soul that receives it, and the ultimate result of the gospel in all the world. And even now the rays of this peace are illuminating the mountain-tops of human experience,—the pledge and the promise that at length

"Beautiful as songs of the immortals
The holy melodies of peace arise"

and fill the whole earth. **Good will toward men.** There are two readings of this phrase in the original, which differ from each other by only a single letter,—*s*: but that letter makes a great difference in the meaning. The Authorized Version translates the Greek *eudokia*, "good-will," in the nominative case, "good-will toward men." The Revised Version uses instead the Greek *eudokias* in the genitive, "among men of good-will," meaning God's good-will, and paraphrases the phrase thus, "among men in whom he is well pleased," so as to express this idea. The authorities for either reading are of nearly equal weight, but the preponderance is rather in favor of *eudokias* and the Revised Version, and

15. And it came to pass, ^k as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing ^l which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

16. And they came with haste, and found ^m Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in ⁿ a manger.

17. And when they ^o had seen *it*, they made known ^p abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

18. And all ^q they that heard *it* wondered at ^r those things which were ^a told them by the shepherds.

19. But ¹ Mary kept all these ^t things, and pondered *them* in her heart.

¹ Luke 2: 51. Gen. 37: 11. Rev. Ver.: *k* when the angels went away. *q* omit they. *r* the.
l that is. *n* the. *s* spoken unto them.
m both Mary. *o* saw it. *t* sayings, pondering them.
p concerning the saying which was spoken to them about this child.

the tendency of scholars has been in the same direction, though of late the tide seems to have turned. Dr. Scrivener says that the reading of the Old Version, *eudokia*, "has the virtually unanimous evidence of the Greek fathers, with an authority from which there is, or ought to be, no appeal." Godet says, "This use of the genitive is singularly rude, and almost barbarous; the *men of good-will*, meaning those on whom good-will rests, is a mode of expression without any example." And Canon Cook "has no hesitation in retaining the received text with its natural interpretation." And now comes a new argument in the Lewis manuscript of the Gospels, just discovered (1892) in the convent at Mt. Sinai, in which the old reading, "Good-will toward men," is confirmed.

But the greatest objection to the text of the Revised Version is that the truth then spoken, as it would naturally be understood, is not worth the while of an angel host to bring from heaven as a chief part of so brief a song. It was well known on earth long before; even the heathen knew that there was peace among those with whom God was well pleased. But what the world needed to know was that God had good-will toward *all* men; that the holy God loved this sinful, rebellious, unworthy world, lying in darkness and the shadow of death; that the Father loved his wandering, prodigal children, all defiled with sin. To bring this message, to publish the glad tidings that "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life," this was worthy of the whole host of angel messengers to bring to man.

And this is the marvel to mortals revealed,
 When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have pealed,
 That mankind are the children of God. — *Brooks*.

INQUIRING INTO THE TRUTH. 15. Let us now go. At once, without delay. So should we ever seek the Saviour. The shepherds had so much faith in the angel's message that they proceeded to investigate and see for themselves.

16. They came with haste. Showing their zeal and ardor, as well as faith. We can never find the Saviour too soon. And found everything just as the angels had told them; and they then knew that the angel's message was true.

SPREADING THE GOOD NEWS. 17. They made known abroad. Whosoever has truly found the Saviour burns to "proclaim to all around what a Saviour they have found." See Acts 4: 20; 1 John 1: 1, 2.

18. All they that heard it wondered. It was indeed marvellous news, so good that many find it hard to believe that it is true.

KEEPING THE TRUTH IN THE HEART. 19. But Mary, in contrast with the others, kept all these things in her memory. They were treasures whose value the following years revealed to her. Pondered them. Kept revolving them, comparing them with the promises of the Old Testament, and what had been announced to her. Contrast, however, the difference in the reception by the shepherds and by Mary: the one publishes, the other meditates. Both are right: they illustrate different but not inconsistent phases of experience. Pondering and publishing are both Christian duties. — *Abbott*.

20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

PRaising GOD FOR THE GIFT OF HIS SON. 20. **The shepherds returned.** To their duty as shepherds, but with a new life and blessing in all their daily work. Feeding sheep could never again be commonplace toil to them. After our holiest communion with God, our views from the Pisgahs of life, our insight into the word and heaven on the mounts of transfiguration we must return to our daily duties, but with a new life in them, a new blessing on them. **Glorifying** expresses the feeling of the *greatness* of the work. **Praising** refers to the *goodness* displayed in it.

LESSON XIII. — DECEMBER 29.

REVIEW. — PSALM 78, OR HEBREWS II : 24-40.

Golden Text. — *Thy Kingdom come.* — MATT. 6: 10.

SUBJECT: DEVELOPMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

TIME. — This Quarter's lessons extend over about four hundred years, from B. C. 1443, the beginning of the period of the Judges, to 1055, the close of the reign of Saul. If we include the lessons for the past six months, the period is four hundred and fifty years, beginning with the year at Sinai, 1491 B. C.

COUNTRY. — The map of Palestine should be carefully studied, and the events located in their place. This map should become so familiar that whenever a Bible event is mentioned it will immediately be located mentally.

Palestine proper, the land west of the Jordan, extends from Mount Hermon on the north to the southern end of the Dead Sea, about 180 miles, which is also the length of the coast line. It is twenty-five miles wide at the north, and sixty from the Dead Sea to the coast through Gaza. It has an area of about 6,600 square miles, a little less than Massachusetts. But the tribes at this time occupied also a large area east of the Jordan, so that the whole domain of the twelve tribes was about 12,000 square miles.

THE CHART on page 8 will give aid in reviewing this lesson.

I. GENERAL REVIEW.

In this it will be wise to include the period covered by the lessons for six months. You will notice by the accompanying diagram the main features of this period. It divides itself into four epochs, each one having its peculiar part in the development of the nation. It will be well to draw something of the kind on the blackboard, and drill the school in the main features of the period.

WILDERNESS. 40 years.	CONQUEST. 7 years.	JUDGES. 350 years.				KINGS. 40 years.	
						First Dynasty	Royal Line.
Moses.	Joshua.	Gideon.	Jephthah.	Ruth.	Samuel.	Saul.	David.
Sinai. Golden calf. Spies. Bribe, serpent. Long discipline. The new start. Death of Moses. Crossing Jordan. Jericho. Achan. Caleb. Wars. Covenant.		Deborah.	Barak.	Samson.	Eli.	Saul chosen. Jonathan. Goliath. David anointed. Saul rejected.	

1491. B. C. 1451.

1443.

1095.

1055.

II. REVIEW BY PERSONS.

Most of the history of this period is connected with leading persons, whose history will furnish one view of the history of the times. Let the scholars tell what part each of the following persons had in the progress of events.

MOSES	GIDEON	SAMUEL
AARON	SAMSON	SAUL
JOSHUA	RUTH	DAVID
CALEB	ELI	JONATHAN
ACHAN	ELI'S SONS	GOLIATH

III. REVIEW BY EVENTS.

This review covers the same ground from a different standpoint. Show what each event had to do with the unfolding, through the divine Providence, of the Kingdom of God in the Israelitish nation.

Giving of the law.	Crossing the Jordan.	Call of Samuel.
Golden calf.	Fall of Jericho.	Saul and his possibilities.
Wilderness wanderings.	Defeat at Ai.	David chosen.
The report of the spies.	The conquest.	Saul rejected.
The fiery serpents.	The covenant.	Victory over Goliath.
The death of Moses.	Period of the Judges.	Friendship with
The captain of the Lord's host.	Gideon's victory.	Jonathan.

IV. REVIEW BY PICTURES.

A pleasing review, especially for the younger classes, can be made from unmounted photographs of pictures by great artists, and sometimes by the stereopticon, with descriptions. The same subjects will make excellent subjects for word pictures.

UNMOUNTED PHOTOGRAPHS. Head of Moses. — *Angelo* and *Botticelli*. The Law Proclaimed from Sinai. — *Doré*. Deborah. — *Visscher*. Moses Smiting the Rock. — *Murillo* and *Doré*. The Brazen Serpent. — *Gerard Van Weire*. Elevation of Brazen Serpent. — *M. Angelo*, *Sistine Chapel*. Crossing the Jordan. — *Doré*. Ruth, Elimelech, and Naomi. — *Bruck-Lajos*. The Return of Naomi. — *Bida*. Gideon Frightens the Army of Midian. — *Doré*. Samson with the Brazen Gates. — *Antonelli* and *Doré*. Samson and the Lion. — *Raphael*. Death of Samson. — *Doré*. Samuel presented Eli. — *Opie*. Samuel Anointing Saul. — *Doré*. David. — *M. Angelo*. David Elected King. — *Hans Memling*. David and Goliath. — *M. Angelo*. David Triumphs. — *Jan Livens*. Triumph of David. — *Rosselli*.

V. REVIEW BY MORAL AND RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS.

1. How the Lord trains a people by rewards and punishments.
2. How the people sometimes choose the second best.
3. Two instances of victory over great enemies, and the lessons they teach us toward gaining the victory over our spiritual enemies.
4. Three great men chosen in youth for great deeds that would help on the kingdom of God. Their early training and preparation, the effect of their personal choices, their possibilities, and how they used them.
5. A beautiful example of choosing God and his people, and its application to us.
6. God's call and our answer.
7. Rejecting God by disobedience, and its effects.
8. Obedience the test of true religion.
9. God's past aid an encouragement in present difficulty.
10. An example of true friendship. Apply to friendship with Jesus.
11. How all these things helped to prepare for the coming of Jesus into the world, and the founding of his kingdom. How the Saviour helps us to make the right choices, do brave deeds, live right lives, and possess true virtues.

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